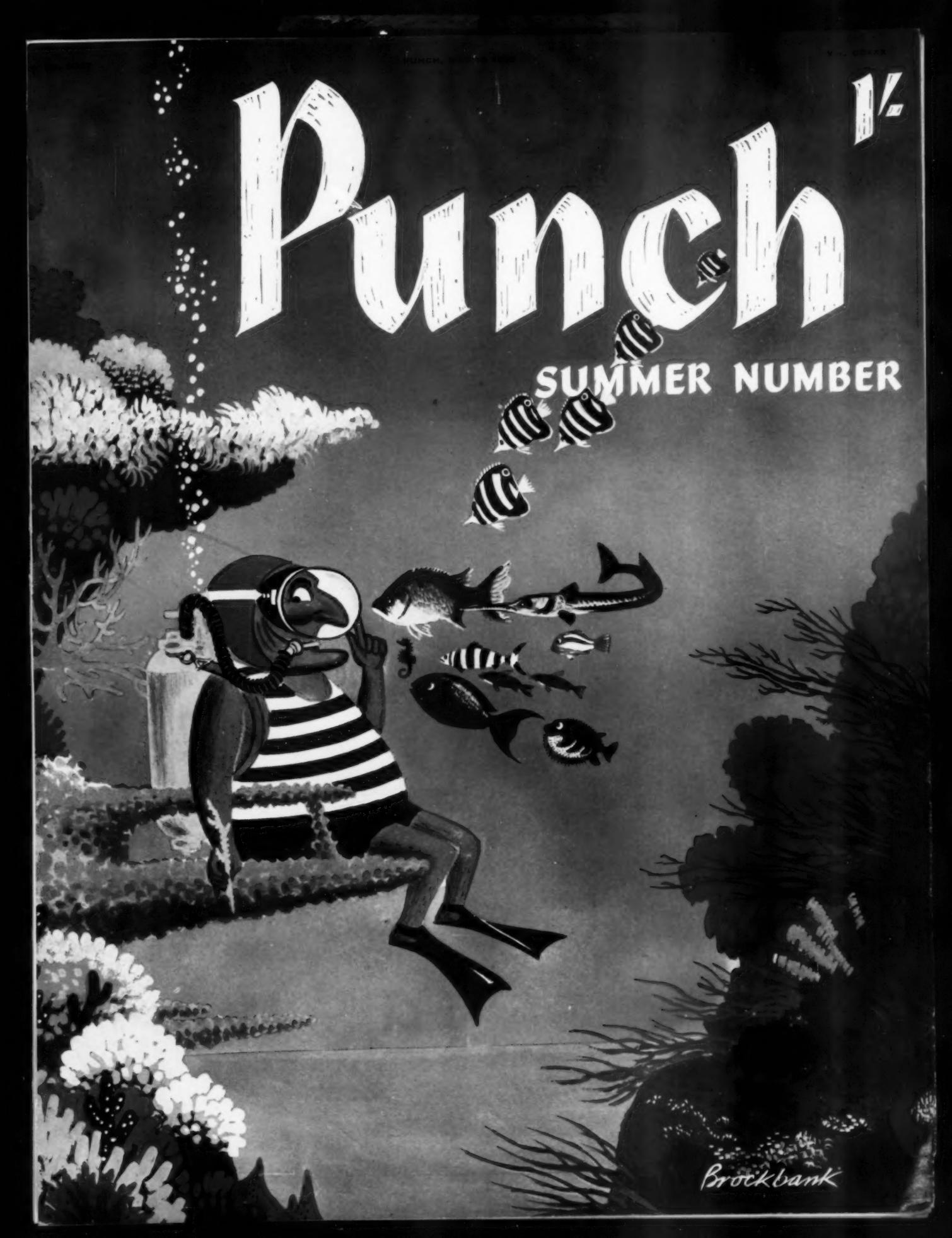


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"You asked for Benson & Hedges cigarettes, Sir"

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TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
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TRW/12



MARGARET LOCKWOOD the famous star, is appearing in the Agatha Christie play "SPIDER'S WEB" (now well into its second year) at the Savoy Theatre, London.

Julia 'Toots' Lockwood, following in her mother's footsteps, is already launched on her film career. She is appearing in the latest Herbert Wilcox film "MY TEEN-AGE DAUGHTER". For Julia's birthday, Margaret Lockwood gave her daughter a Parker '51' with a Rolled Gold Cap.

Margaret Lockwood gave her daughter Julia a Parker '51' for her birthday



Rare, costly nib-point—exclusive electro-polishing process

The elegance of the Parker '51', its distinction and graceful proportions—these are as universally admired as its fine craftsmanship. Today, in its latest form, it is a gift more desired than ever—a yet more gracious compliment.

The nib-point is now made of Plathenium, our own creation—an alloy of the rare and costly metals, Platinum and Ruthenium.

Every Parker '51' is tipped with Plathenium, electro-polished by our own exclusive process more highly than is possible with any other nib-point material.

It's so wear-resistant that years of writing

cannot alter it; the nib that writes so smoothly today will write just as smoothly, with just the width of line you like, for many years to come.

For that very special occasion, consider this latest Parker '51' with Rolled Gold Cap. It's a very special gift. *Choice of 4 colours and 8 different nib grades.* Price (Rolled Gold Cap) 108/-, (Rolled Silver Cap) 96/-, (Lustraloy Cap) 84/-.

'51' Pen with matching '51' Ballpoint or Pencil

ROLLED GOLD CAPS £8.3.3

ROLLED SILVER CAPS £7.5.3

LUSTRALOY CAPS £6.7.9

Ballpoint or pencil alone 54/-

Ballpoint or pencil alone 48/-

Ballpoint or pencil alone 41/-

NOW—the matching '51' Ballpoint

In exquisite elegance and performance, in precision of workmanship and design, the Parker '51' Ballpoint is a fitting companion to the famous '51' pen.

The '51' Ballpoint has five times the usual writing capacity, and rotating ball-seat action to ensure even wear and constant ink flow. Its sliding cap extends and retracts the ball. *Choice of 4 colours.*

PRICE:

ROLLED GOLD CAP 54/-

ROLLED SILVER CAP 48/-

LUSTRALOY CAP 42/-

Available with matching '51' pen.

and—NEW

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In colours to match the Duofold range, 21/-. A counterpart in perfection of finish and style, to these famous models:

Senior Duofold 44/3 Victory 31/10
Duofold 39/- Slimfold 24/8

Duofold Ballpoint or Pencil to match all these, 21/-.

Parker '51'

The world's most wanted pen

GIVEN AND USED BY FAMOUS PEOPLE



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(TO THE TUNE OF "I DREAMT THAT I DWELT")



I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls
Designed in the very best taste ;
There were pictures by Landseer adorning the walls.
And potted palms prettily placed.
There were butlers and flunkies to do my behest
In a very respectful way ;
And I also dreamt, which pleased me best,
That they gave me a Guinness a day.

Its goodness and flavour quite captured my heart,
I was thrilled by its ruby-like gleam ;
And then, to my sorrow, I woke with a start
And found it was only a dream.
Yet though palaces, pictures and palms, and the rest
That I dreamt of have vanished away,
I can still have the one thing that pleases me best —
I can still have a Guinness a day.

LIFE IS BRIGHTER AFTER GUINNESS



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Your suits travel on hangers!

To pack his suits quickly, without getting them creased, a man needs a Rev-Robe! It carries suits on hangers, neatly tailor-folded.

A Rev-Robe is easy to pack, easy to carry, and—like all Revelation luggage—is practical, smart, and well-made. Ideal for air travel.

Rev-Robes are available in a wide range of models in fabrics, fibres and fine leathers to match other Revelation luggage. Prices from £7.15s. od. to £18.10s. od.

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TRAY-LID →

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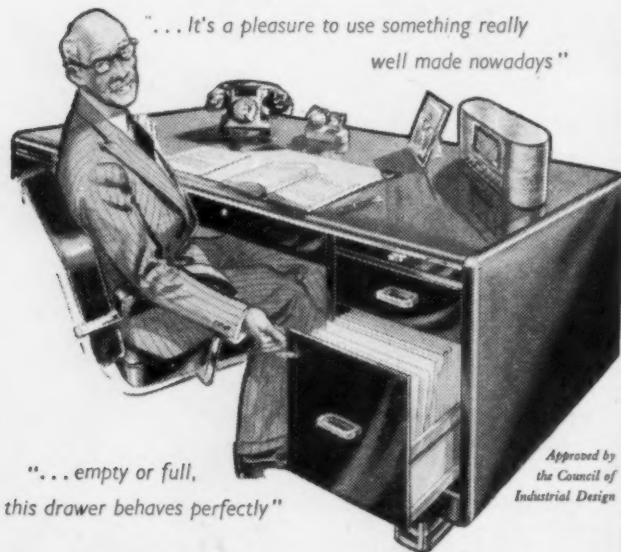
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this drawer behaves perfectly"

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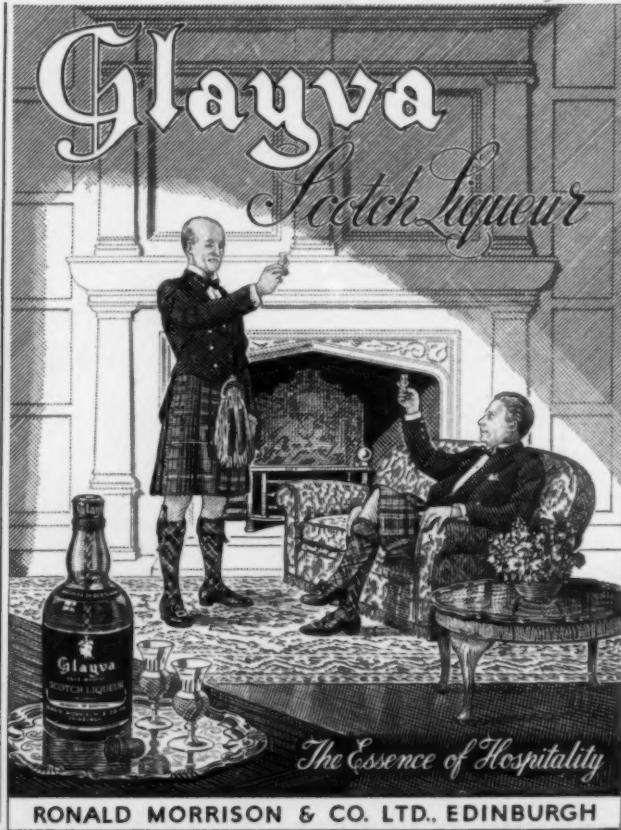
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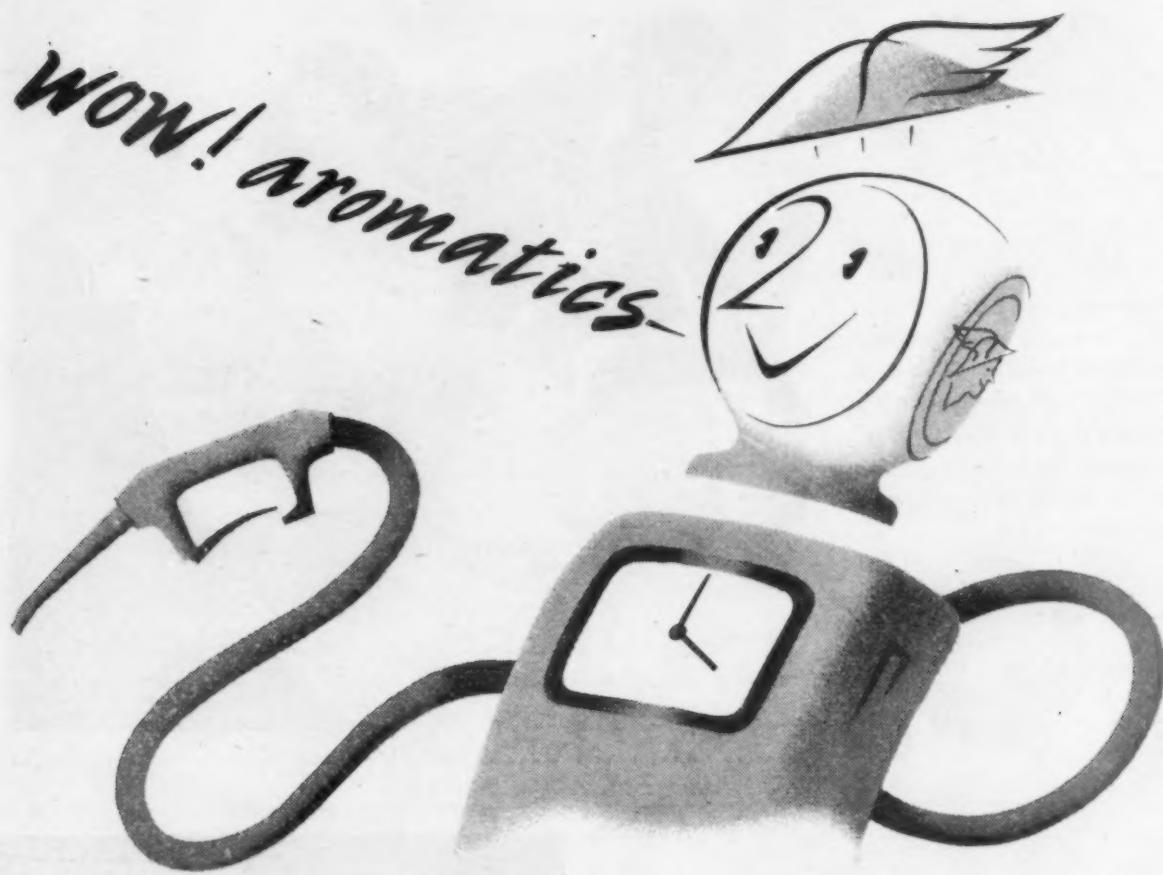
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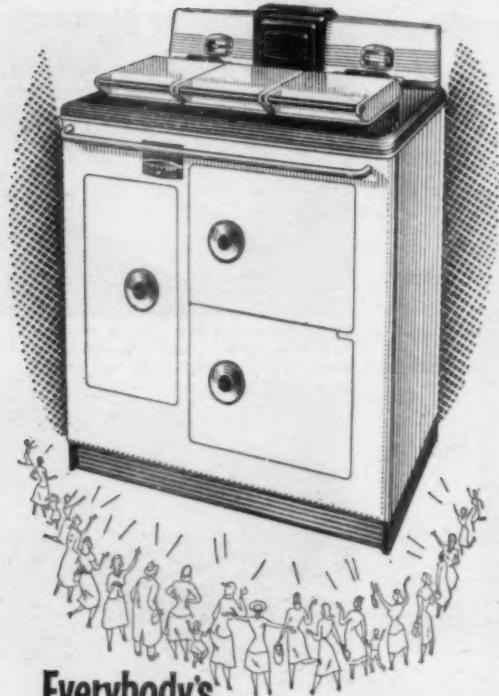


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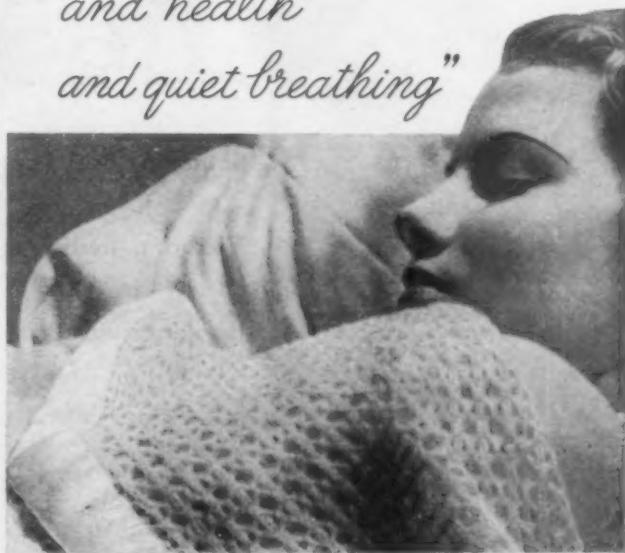
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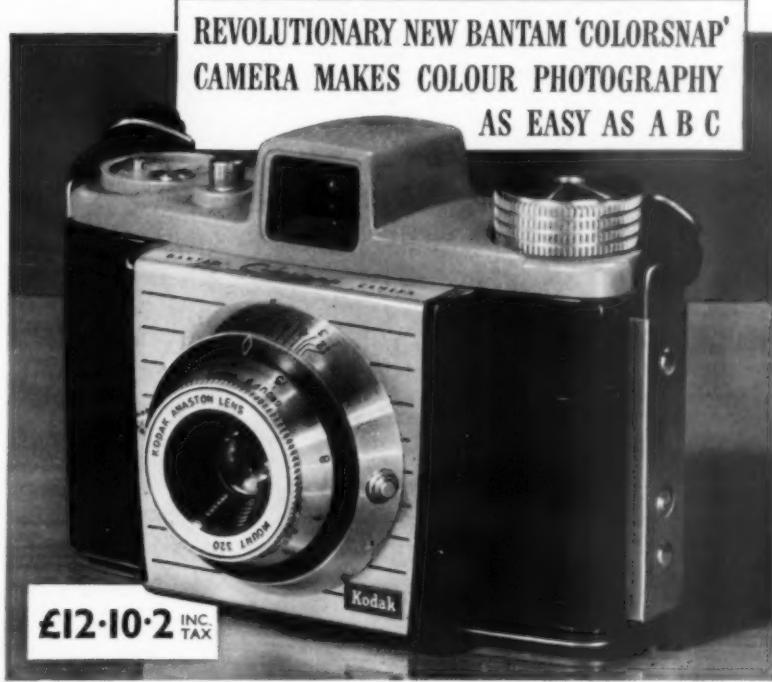
Now Kodak make it come true in colour

WHEN black and white photography began it was for experts only. Then Kodak came along and brought the pleasure of snapshots to millions all the world over.

Now Kodak begin a second revolution in picture taking. And this time it brings glorious natural colour photography to the ordinary snapshotter. Here at last is a colour camera that anyone can use with brilliant success even if they've never taken a snap in their lives.

The new Bantam 'Colorsnap' camera cuts through all technicalities. There is no need to know anything about apertures and shutter speeds. The few simple instructions for taking fine colour pictures are built into the back of the camera. Follow them and you'll be sure of success.

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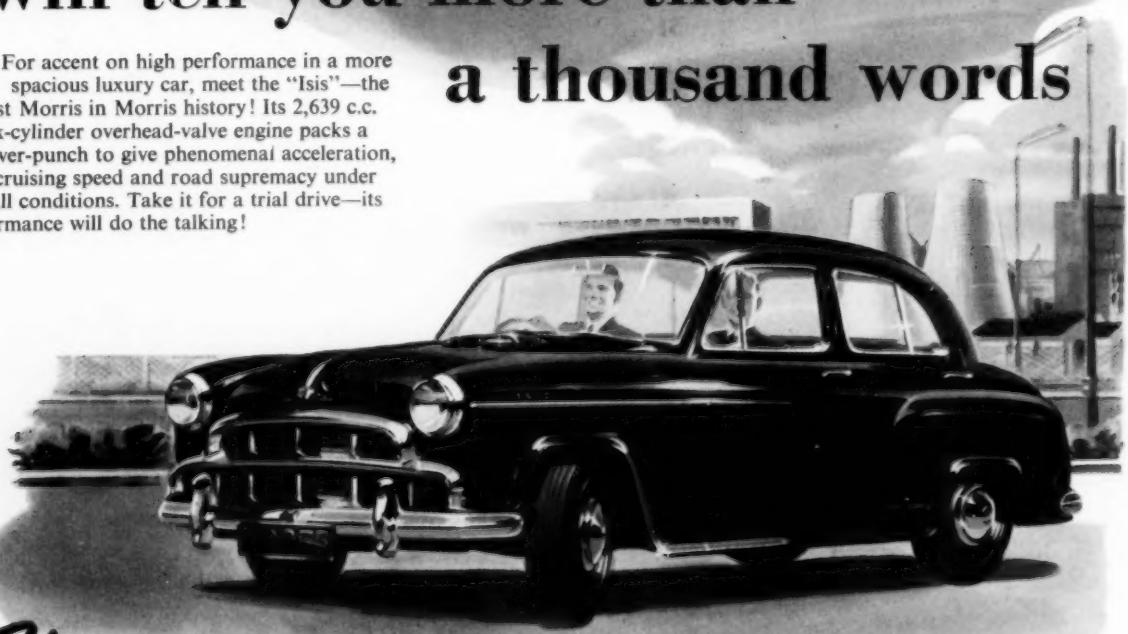
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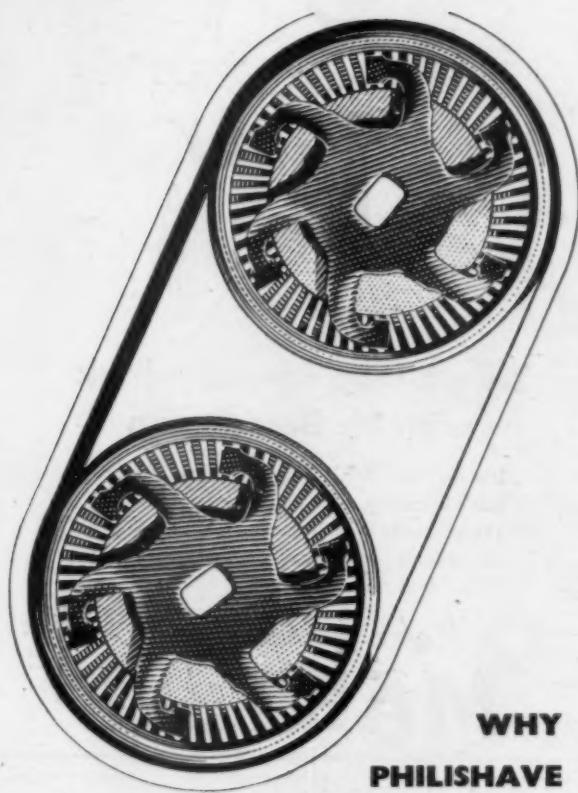


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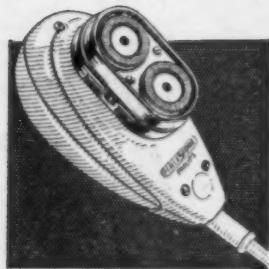
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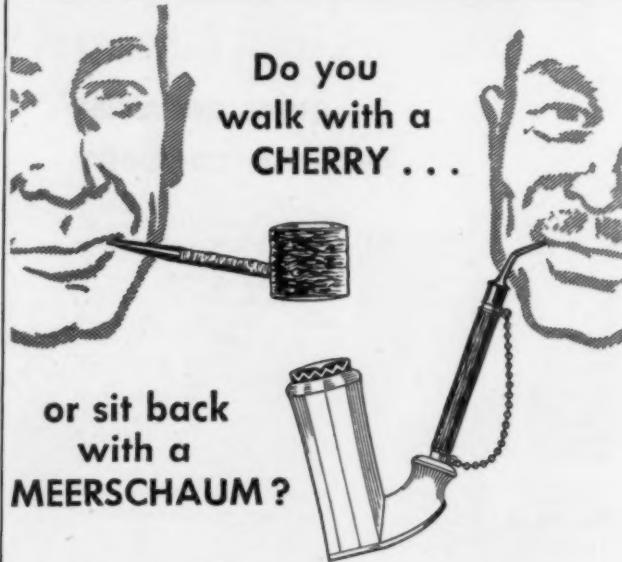
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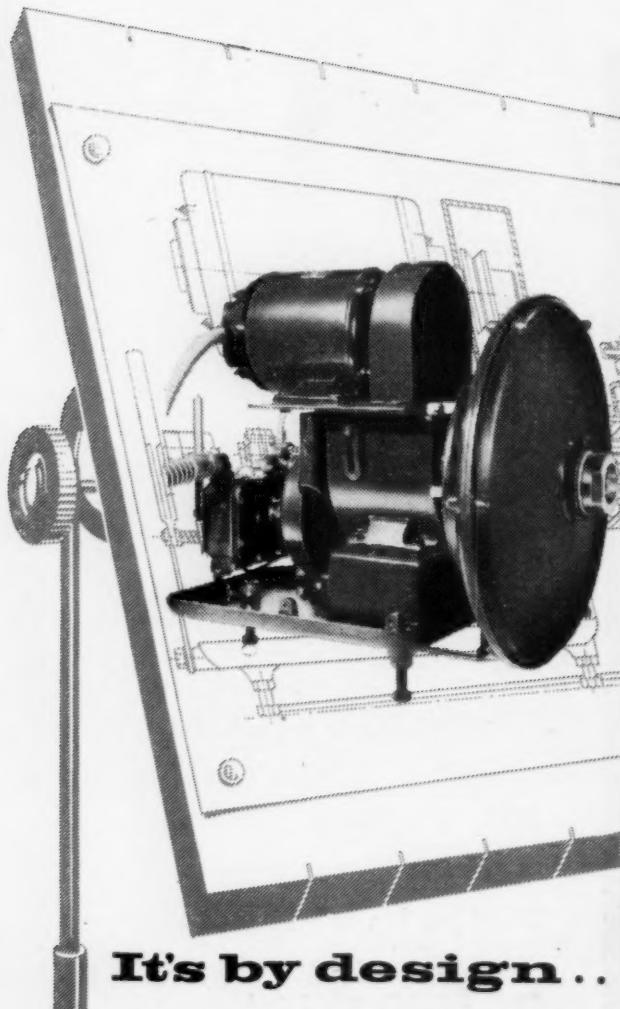


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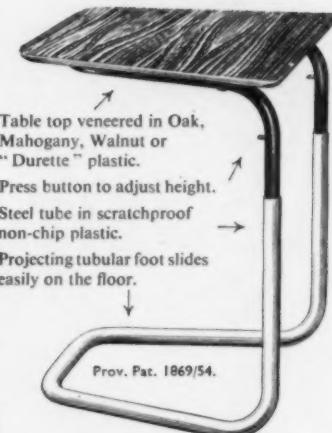
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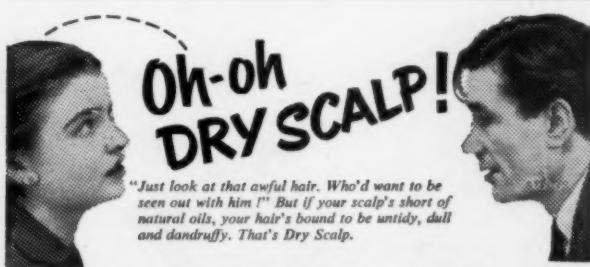
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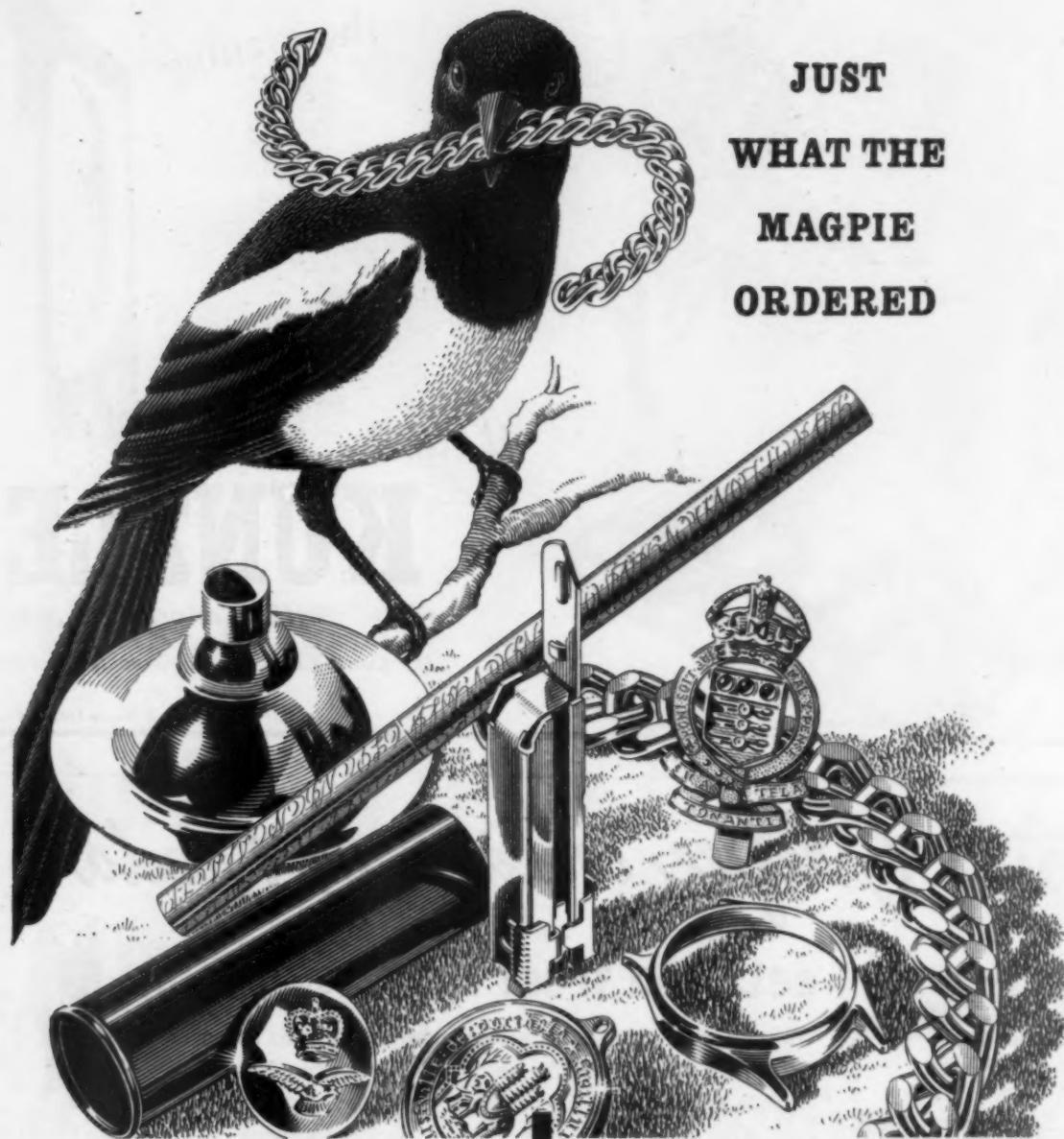
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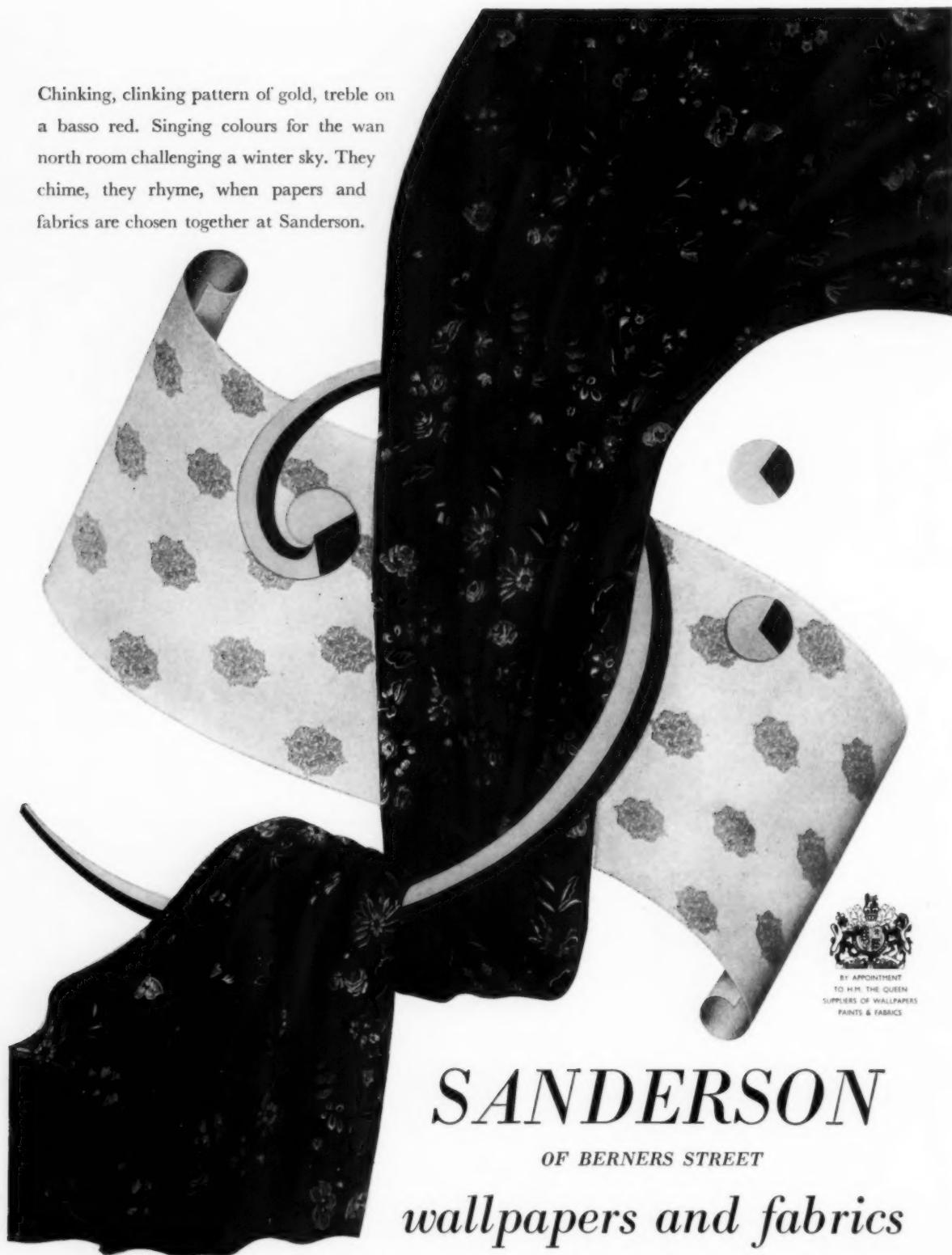
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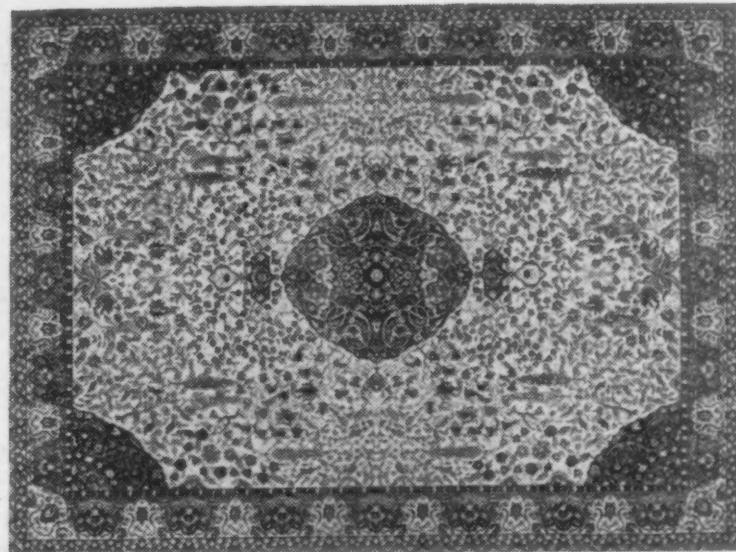


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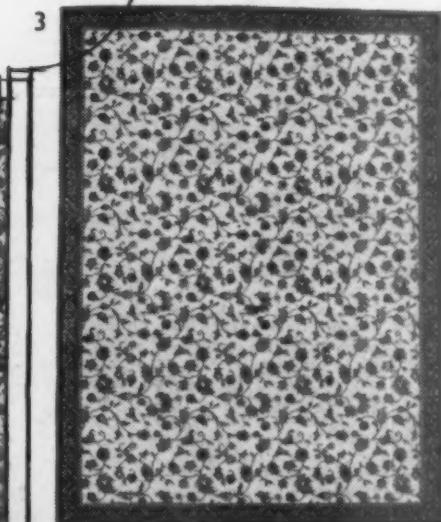
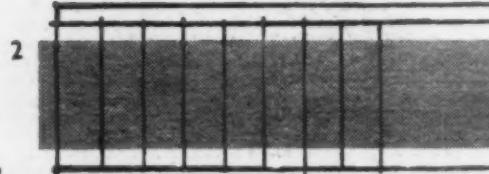
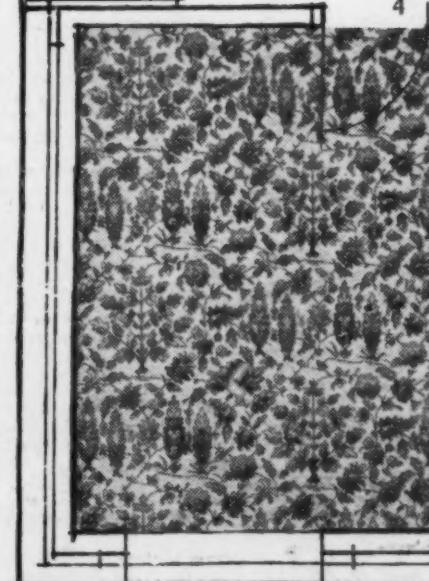
FLOOR PLAN

1 Fine seamless Wilton carpet, with Persian design and colouring on fawn; various sizes, example shown, 12' x 9' £61.4.0

2 Plain Wilton, super quality, for hall, stairs and close covered rooms; example shown, 27" wide 54/6 yd also from 42/11 yd

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MALACCA RUBBER PLANTATIONS LIMITED

SIR JOHN HAY'S JUBILEE STATEMENT

This is the Company's Jubilee year. A backward glance, rather than the customary review of the present, would seem more appropriate to such an occasion. When Malacca Rubber Plantations was floated in January 1906 the pound was worth a golden sovereign. The national revenue for that year was £142m. The present yield is 36 times greater. Income Tax was at the rate of 1/- in the £ and surtax did not exist. It was imposed three years later at a rate of sixpence and applicable only to incomes of £5,000 p.a. Taxation on personal incomes in this country now rises as high as 18/6d. Striking as these changes may be, they are fully matched by contrasting events within the narrower context of this Company's history. Even by past standards the prospects of The Malacca Rubber Plantations would be judged a remarkable document. In the present it might well be regarded as something of a collector's piece. The Company was formed to acquire the Bukit Asahan Estate, now our largest and most profitable producer. Mr. W. W. Bailey, then described by the *Straits Times* as the Chairman of the local Planters Association and "as a planter on a large scale himself and a sportsman and a gentleman," was engaged to report on the estate. In forwarding his report under date of July 1905 "to be handed to you when you pay £400 sterling to my credit," he wrote "my report is 21 pages long and I think will please you." But whatever pleasure it may have given to others it was viewed with disfavour by the promoters who by law were required to publish it in their prospectus. There it was described, and rightly so, as "of an exceedingly unfavourable character" as well as "inconsistent with the information which the vendors had received from other sources." They felt that it was scarcely possible for Mr. Bailey to have made a thorough examination within the short time of three days. The vendors accordingly sent out Mr. A. W. Copeland to inspect and report. It was admitted that Mr. Copeland had no previous experience as a rubber planter. The important factors in their estimation, however, were the number and girth of the trees and as Mr. Copeland could both count and measure he was judged fully competent "to make the investigation," particularly having regard to his 20 years' experience of planting other crops in India. Although he could not claim like Mr. Bailey to be an experienced rubber planter, I can say from subsequent acquaintance with Mr. Copeland that he was fully deserving of the description accorded to Mr. Bailey by the *Straits Times*, viz., "a sportsman and a gentleman."

Mr. Copeland's report was presented in January 1906 and the Company was floated with a subscribed capital of £300,000. The price paid for the property, consisting of approximately 3,000 acres of rubber nearly all very immature and largely interplanted with tapioca, was £225,000, which Mr. Bailey had valued at £76,181. The Company's early dividend performances were modest and the fixed preference dividend for 1906 and 1907 was paid only by resort to drafts on a sum of £15,000 which by agreement was deposited by the vendors to make good any deficiency in revenue necessary for that purpose. Undeterred by initial difficulties and the meagreness of results, the Company proceeded to plant up 6,000 acres acquired from Government under terms of the prospectus.

EXPANSION

About this time the prospects of rubber as a highly profitable field for investment were being more widely realized and the urge to acquire and expand increased. By 1909 the Company owned nearly 25,000 acres, of which 15,000 acres were planted. To finance this extension a debenture of £500,000 bearing interest at 6% was issued in November of that year and the authorised ordinary capital was increased to £400,000. Although the report issued in that year disclosed profits of less than £10,000, the terms for conversion of debentures into ordinary shares were set at £10 of debenture stock for one ordinary share of £1 which so far were without dividend. An estimate of future yields was given showing a rapid annual increase culminating in a forecast for 1915 of 7,500,000 lbs. These figures proved extravagantly excessive. In no instance were they nearly realized. The actual crop for 1915 was less than half the estimated figure. But the glamour of rubber was now irresistible, past shortcomings in performance were overlooked in the blinding light of future prospects. In 1910 rubber touched 12/9d. per lb. (in terms of present currency the equivalent of about 60/-). The Company's report for that year showed that despite the stimulus of such a price the crop was only about half of what was estimated. A dividend of 10% was recommended and, although earned in 1910, was not made payable until 1912. The feature of that report was a statement to the effect that "the directors consider that they will be able to distribute hereafter quarterly dividends of 5/- per share"; that is the equivalent of 100% per annum, and "hereafter" without qualification. Such a prediction made in respect of any industry, especially one engaged in tropical agriculture, must surely be unique in its boldness. But that it

was accepted in some circles without doubt is evident from the announcement that 10,000 ordinary shares of £1 each had been issued at £15 and subscribed, although the dividend just then announced was no more than 10%. Despite the doubtful policy of distributing fully such profits as were made, dividends never reached the rate predicted. A total of 40% was paid in respect of 1911 and for 1912 as much as 75% was distributed and in this year the Company's authorised capital was raised to £1,000,000, at which figure it still stands. A dividend of 75% proved to be the Company's high water mark never again to be reached. Moreover, that such liberal distributions were seriously impairing the financial resources of the Company could hardly be concealed. The balance sheet for that year showed liabilities, including the funded debt, of over £600,000, against which cash resources were less than £11,000. In the following year (1913) dividends, although still substantial, suffered a severe decline to 25% and fell still further in 1914, but recovered again in 1915 and 1916 when as much as 45% was paid. But such vicissitudes of fortune and the dangers inherent in a rapidly changing statistical position seemed to go unheeded and undetected whilst the proud claim was advanced that Malacca Rubber Plantations was "the largest planting proposition in the Malay peninsula."

DECLINE AND CRISIS

The circumstances of the war in the years 1914/18 masked the disagreeable fact that under the stimulus of highly profitable prices of former years rubber expansion had proceeded at such a pace that production was outstripping consumption. Prices fell in 1917, to recover temporarily in 1919, only to lapse again in 1920 to a level that was barely profitable. This post-war depression exposed the weaknesses of the Company—its incoherent organization on the ground and the paucity of cash due to improvident finance. Retrenchment and reform became essential to the very survival of the Company. Chastened and sobered by a situation calling for immediate and radical action, the Company decided to renounce its former position of splendid isolation and seek the shelter and comfort of other associates in the same industry. Guthrie & Company were thereupon appointed Agents and Secretaries. This change, made in October 1920, marks the beginning of a new phase in the Company's activities and was the occasion upon which I was first elected to the Board.

REORGANIZATION

The first essential need of the Company, if proposed reforms were to be undertaken and the Company was to remain in being, was additional working capital. This was obtained in December 1920 by the issue at 96% of £150,000 seven-year Notes, bearing interest at 8%—a step which was taken in time to enable the Company to face the continuation of the depression. That year, with a production of over 4,000,000 lbs., the selling price of rubber was so little above the production cost of approximately 1/6d. per lb. that it was necessary to pass the dividend on the preference shares. Nevertheless, with the working capital obtained, it was just possible to commence the putting into effect of far-reaching changes and improvements.

These were of two kinds—one, reorganizing and regrouping, the other, modifications of planting and production practices. The first was so vigorously adopted that it was found possible to do away with the separate management offices in Malacca, abolish the former posts of supervisory managers and reduce the number of divisional managements from sixteen to eleven; the following year the office of general manager was allowed to fall into disuse, and the estates were reorganized into eight units, while the staff was reduced to six managers, four acting managers and fifteen assistants.

By virtue of these drastic moves—which included cuts in the salaries of planters by 25%, and the reduction of directors' fees by 50%—the depression was met; the Government restriction scheme, which was instituted in November 1922, was, under the circumstances, welcomed and at the end of 1922 it was possible for the Chairman to claim that "the plantations are in considerably better condition than in 1920." The following year, 1923, saw the issue of 171,036 ordinary £1 shares, at £1 10s., from the proceeds of which the outstanding seven-year Notes were repaid. The confidence so evinced was justified, for in 1923 all arrears of preference share dividends were cleared off, and in 1924 a 10% dividend on ordinary shares was declared. The first stage in recovery was completed, and the Company, after being so near to failure, was now ready to consider longer-term development.

Twenty years after its inception the Company was now faced with the problem inherent in all pioneering, the ageing of the original stock. Replanting with high yielding material was not yet regarded as a technique

advanced to the stage when it could be confidently applied on a large scale. Moreover, it was necessary in this case to adopt more rapid corrective action. This took the form of purchasing two estates consisting of young rubber and now known as our Fortrose and Gemenchew divisions. The purchase consideration in each case was met by the issue of shares, and in order to strengthen further the Company's financial position an issue of over £80,000 shares at approximately £3 per share was made for cash. These transactions were greatly facilitated by the course of rubber prices which, under the operations of the restriction scheme, rose as high as 4/8d. per lb. in 1925 and continued at a profitable level throughout the two subsequent years.

DEPRESSION

The restriction scheme was terminated in 1928. Towards the end of 1929 there appeared incipient signs of what subsequently proved to be a worldwide depression of unprecedented severity. But before this had developed the Company had the foresight to seek and obtain in 1930 additional funds by the issue of £150,000 7% debentures. By the following year the reorganization plans were carried through their final stage. The number of estate units of management was reduced to the present figure of five and, aided by further economies, the Company succeeded in escaping with only a trifling loss despite a heavy fall in the price of rubber. The depression, however, showed no sign of lifting and in fact degenerated into a disastrous slump and in 1932 rubber touched its nadir at the figure of 1½d. per lb. At that level no rubber producer could escape loss.

RECOVERY

The product of this desperate situation was an agreement for the regulation of rubber supplies on an international basis. An acceptable scheme was formulated and adopted by the Governments of nine territories and brought into force in 1934, confidence was thereby quickly restored and soon thereafter we were able to repay all the outstanding 6% debentures from the proceeds of an issue of £120,000 ordinary shares. The 7% debentures carried an option to exchange to ordinary stock and in the years 1934 and 1935 all options were exercised. Thus, by 1935, the Company was at last free from all debenture liability and all arrears on the 7½% preference shares had also been made up. In 1935 dividend payments on ordinary shares were resumed.

REPLANTING

Having successfully weathered the storm, the directors were free to give renewed attention to the large areas of ageing rubber possessed by the Company, much of which was now obsolete and becoming increasingly uneconomic. So that the important work of replanting should be carried out on the basis of accurately ascertained fact, qualified soils officer was engaged to carry out a soils survey and, in conjunction with the central research organization, to prescribe the treatment best suited to successful replanting and sustained, vigorous growth. This policy of replacement was energetically pursued and by 1941 over 4,000 acres had been replanted with high yielding stock. But at this point disaster overtook us. Malaya was forced to surrender to the Japanese; the country was occupied and our estates passed out of our possession.

JAPANESE OCCUPATION AND REHABILITATION

Complete disruption of the whole organization followed immediately on enemy occupation. There were also the steadily-mounting consequences of neglect of upkeep in a tropical climate where growth is rapid and rank. Added to all that was the wanton destruction of young replanted rubber and damage to equipment and buildings. The difficult work of rehabilitation had to be done at a cost much higher than formerly prevailed, due to inflation—one of the inevitable consequences of a war which covered the world over the years 1939/45. Labour had to be rewarded at higher rates whilst the supply of materials and equipment was scarce and, when obtainable, very costly. The conventional rate of export duty was formerly 2½%. This was steeply upgraded on successive occasions and became a heavy burden on costs. As if to aggravate further war's disasters our own Government, for reasons never yet explained, fixed the price of rubber at a figure below the cost of production at a time when demand was in excess of supply. The task of meeting this situation, unprecedented in its difficulties, fell to a Board depleted by the death of two of its former members including the Chairman. It was at this stage in the Company's history that I was elected Chairman. Prior to the war I paid many visits to Malaya and thereby acquired a first-hand knowledge of the Company's properties as well as formed a close acquaintance with our officers in the East. These visits were resumed soon after the reoccupation, the last of which was made as recently as January this year. Examination of our estates at various stages in their development and participation in local discussions and conferences have proved of immense value to me in the discharge of my duties as Chairman.

POST-WAR PROGRESS

Whilst rehabilitation, including, of course, the resumption of productive operations, was accepted as our first urgent task, there was no readiness to take the view that restoration to former standards would be sufficient. If the Company was to compete successfully with the new synthetic product, the rapid development of which had been fostered by the clamant needs of war, it was essential that the post-war policy of Malacca Rubber Plantations should be progressive and forward looking. Despite difficulties many of which were inseparable from the post-war situation, and notwithstanding future uncertainties inherent in the capricious character of rubber, which in 1947 touched 8½d. per lb., and rose in 1951 to 6½d. per lb., the Company steadfastly pursued a programme of improvement. Simultaneously with recovery it resumed replanting and since 1946 old seedling rubber extending to nearly 7,000 acres has been replaced with

modern high yielding stock, the earliest plantings of which are now yielding and are a contributing factor to outputs which surpass anything achieved in the pre-war era. But replanting, important as it may be, was not the only line of advance. The disposition and treatment of labour was a feature of post-war progress. Labour was so re-organized as to render its efforts more economic in results. Its better treatment was expressed not only in increased and increasing pay but in more modern housing and in extended amenities. It is perhaps not generally appreciated that in addition to the provision of houses for its resident labour, the estate owner in Malaya has the responsibility of providing the social and welfare services such as medical, including maternity benefits, elementary education, provision for old age, etc., more generally regarded as State obligations. In common with other enlightened employers this Company does not confine its provisions to the requirements of the law, but by extended recreational facilities aims at building up and maintaining a healthy and contented labour force. We have long had in force a profit-sharing scheme in which our executive and supervisory staff share. Promotion in our service is not barred by race or colour. But we have not been content to rest on what might be represented as a negation. In recent years we have in association with other companies in this group taken positive steps to train Asians for senior posts by establishing a cadet scheme, under which an Asian qualified by education and character may receive special training to fit him for the highest posts.

Our processing methods have been adapted and changed to meet the changing needs of manufacturers. The most recent and outstanding development in that respect was the building of a second group factory furnished to process and concentrate latex. Demand for natural rubber in this form, however, is notoriously variable and we must persevere so equipped and flexible as to adjust readily our processes to meet altering requirements.

All these activities have been carried on despite conditions of disturbance and danger. Communist insurrection first manifested itself in 1948 by the murder of defenceless men engaged in their peaceful and lawful duties. It has continued ever since and has been marked by violence, destruction, intimidation and terrorism. The steps taken to meet this emergency have had considerable success, but insecurity still lingers and danger is not yet absent. The measures designed for the safety of the population are necessarily restrictive, particularly in regard to the distribution of food and the movements of persons. Although their necessity is admitted, it is only natural that labour should not regard with favour such inhibitory orders and should seek escape into less disturbed and freer areas. The achievement of so much under conditions of instability, disturbance and danger, is surely the occasion for legitimate pride as well as for an expression of our admiration for those whose duty has required them to serve in dangerous places.

In 1952 the Company was honoured by a visit of H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent to our Bertam Estate. In execution of our policy of replacement all old seedling trees will eventually be destroyed, but to this there will be one distinguished exception; the tree that bears the mark of a royal cut will be preserved.

PAST AND PRESENT

The Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts circulated with this discloses in its recital of facts the state of the Company in its Jubilee year. Despite the calamities of war and the instabilities of a subsequent peace, we have established a position of financial strength which contrasts favourably with the past and our trading results are such as to enable us fittingly to celebrate this occasion by doubling last year's distribution without impairment of that measure of financial power which is the prerequisite to our continuing to follow a consistently progressive policy. Subject to a serious and prolonged interruption by war, we have since 1936 engaged in replanting and of our total cultivated area 60% now consists of modern high yielding stock. A considerable portion of that, however, is immature and of the area tappable 50% is still under old seedling rubber. That position, however, is rapidly changing in our favour for as each year passes an increasing area of post-war replantings is reaching the productive stage. Herein lies the promise of steadily improving yields beyond the standard reached, although that is already two-and-a-half times as much per acre as the rate prevailing in the 1920's. There is, of course, an economic limit to the rate at which replacement of plantations can take place, and eager as we may be to get rid of the remaining promiscuous stock, nearly another decade may pass before that is accomplished. Such a long-drawn-out procedure may be trying to one's patience, but in its inevitable gradualness it does ensure a stability that would otherwise be lacking if the supplies of natural rubber could be so rapidly increased as to distort the relationship of supply to demand. It is true that man's inventiveness may in this instance outstrip the slow processes of nature and that synthetic supplies are capable of a more rapid increase, but there are other reasons operating to put a check on the rate of expansion. Moreover, impressive as may be the technical achievements in the realm of synthetics there is a continuing need for natural rubber in all its unique qualities, and at competitive prices an ever-expanding demand. Our past history with its story, so briefly told, of difficulties surmounted, of serious setback and marked recovery, of change, adaptability and development, together with our record of present achievement should combine to give solid reason for a confident hope for the future.

It is entirely appropriate that this review should conclude with a special word of thanks to all who are engaged in the Company's service. It is on their industry, skill and devotion that our success depends. Arrangements have been made for their participation in the Company's Jubilee celebrations. Anticipating what I am sure would be the wishes of stockholders, they will be associated in our message of goodwill which will be sent to our staff and workers in the East.



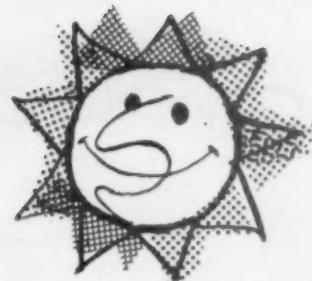
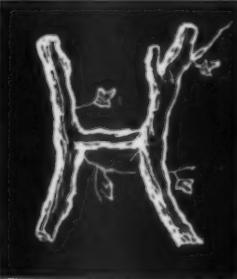
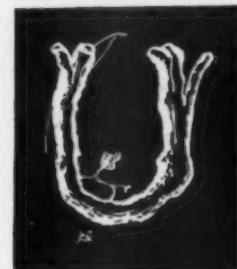
The Hereford Round

After an hour and a half of shooting, everyone welcomes the break for refreshment. What a good idea to provide Nescafé! With Nescafé it is so easy to make perfect coffee. And there's none of the bother of brewing coffee the old way! Even the most conservative of coffee-lovers would agree that Nescafé gives you all the roaster-fresh goodness of pure coffee to the full.



there's always time for

NESCAFE
100% PURE COFFEE



SUMMER NUMBER

My Heart's in the Headlines

PASS me the can, sang Housman sadly; there's an end of May.

He seems to have liked to celebrate the parting of anything gay;
But it isn't the parting of anything gay that I shall toast in my pub,
But the parting of Malenkov,

Khrushchev, Serov,

Burgess, Maclean,

King Hussein

And even of General Glubb.

They've hogged the headlines between them for nigh on a year at least,
With the all-too-unsphinxlike Nasser and that turbulent Cypriot priest,
And none of the boys in Fleet Street seem ever to care a toss
About giving some space in a prominent place
To names like Finney,

Thompson, Brace,

Landy or Stirling Moss.

So pass *me* the can, you newshawks; I'll join you in one for the road—
To Lester Piggott, Chris Chataway, Milesian, Pat Smythe, Lew Hoad,
And to non-political headlines with something pleasant to say
About Tyson, Graveney,

Compton, Cowdry,

Miller, Lindwall,

And most of all

The triumphant beginning of May.

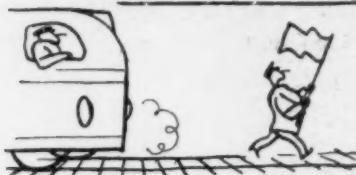
B. A. YOUNG

MAY 16, 1956

AUTOMATION is here. It must be accepted. In the meantime it is everyone's duty to learn exactly what it means, and a recent survey of the Coventry upset does a valuable service by explaining that the automatic transfer machine—one of the bones of current contention—moves a piece of work from place to place, "at each of which a different operation—such as reaming, drilling or boring—is done . . ." Readers trying to visualize this should cast their minds back to any piece of machinery they've seen in a short "interest" film since about 1923.

What about Cows on the Line?

ENCOURAGING news for rail passengers is contained in reports that, after seven years of intensive testing, automatic control systems have been perfected.



Feelings that modern science is marvellous are only slightly impaired by the disclosure that the scheme is fundamentally the same as one used by "the old Great Western."

Grievance

MISS DIANA DORS struck a blow for celebrities everywhere with that complaint about having to foot her own bill at the Cannes festival. Sometimes it is impossible to conceive how mean a celebrity's employers can get. It's bad enough to have to choke down all that champagne: to be asked to pay for it is an outrage.

On the Inside Looking In

LETTER-WRITERS to *The Times* are doing their laudable best to arouse interest in present official orgies of bulldozing and flame designed to kill unwanted wild creatures by destroying their natural haunts. So far public

indignation shows no signs of kindling. For that, we may have to wait for reports of vandalism at such treasured beauty spots as Kirk o' Shotts, Holme Moss, Sutton Coldfield, Wenvoe, Pontop Pike and North Hessary Tor.

How Much are the Splints?

CONSIDERABLE sympathy will be felt for the Northumberland County Council in their hurt feelings over getting a bill for R.A.F. assistance in last year's flooding. Headlines of the period had suggested nothing but warm human feelings, selfless heroism, spontaneous public spirit and traditional initiative, and it must have been disappointing to get a Dear Sir, Unless, for £330 13s. 10d. What is needed in times of disaster is, of course, a proper arrangement from the start. The first helicopter to arrive should carry a tariff of charges, to be prominently displayed on any building left standing. If it set the rates out clearly, beginning, say, with the price per victim rescued ("Alive, £3 3s., Dead, £1 11s. 6d."), the municipal authorities would at least be able to decide whether they could reasonably afford it.

Seascape, with Derby Winner

Competition for the holiday-maker's custom is already fiercely raging among our coastal resorts, and it is announced that "the work of cubists, surrealists



and other modern cult painters" will this year be excluded from the Worthing Corporation art gallery. This is a frank bid for the favours of Sir Alfred Munnings.

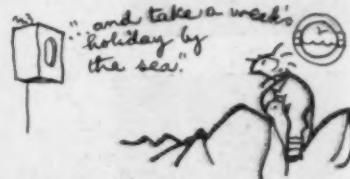
Spoils It

"A RATHER untidy individual," said a headmaster, describing to Bedford

Rotary Club the popular idea of headmasters—"who wears a sports coat and flannels, who smokes a pipe or in these austere days probably chews it, who has many long holidays . . . and a slight schoolmasterly stoop." And about five hundred a year more.

Life on the Ocean Waves

THE rigours of the seafaring life aren't what they were. The latest bit of cossetting for mariners, according to a G.P.O. Press release, is provided by



British coast radio stations which maintain a medical advice service for doctorless ships at sea. As a striking example taken from last month's case-book, "within nine minutes of receipt of a Medico message from the *Transpar*, the doctor had advised 'put the patient ashore.'"

Ask the Co-pilot

ANY suspicions that Mr. Gerard d'Erlanger would be incapable of running B.O.A.C. as a mere part-time chairman were dispelled at a blow by his statement to the Press. His job, he explained, would be to concentrate on "policy, long-range planning and overall financial control." This means that the deputy chairman, Sir George Cribbett, will not, after all, really be doing Mr. d'Erlanger's job for him: even though, as the statement said in the next paragraph, Sir George's chief duty will be to advise Mr. d'Erlanger "on matters of policy, long-range planning and overall financial control."

Lines for a Civic Welcome

CLAP handys,
It's Sandys,
Coming
Slumming.



In this adaptation of the original 1852 emblem of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Minister of Labour stands in the centre. An engineer scorns the benefits of automation, symbolized by the cornucopia of Plenty, but another engineer accepts a pay-packet. The kneeling figures are breaking automatic devices. The busts are Harry Pollitt, Ned Ludd and Sir Vincent Tewson. The application of automation is depicted below.

Automation

By CLAUD COCKBURN

FLYING saucer teams of little men from Venus have already filed numerous reports to the effect that about the only thing nobody in Britain dares say about himself or anyone else is that he is not a Working Man. The difference between one sort of Working Man and the other is that when the one sort are not working they say they are in conference, whereas the others say that they are non-working in defence of something—preferably a principle.

Efforts to get in touch with the various types of Working Men in Britain meet with likewise varied responses. A Working Man from, say, Westphalia or Nagasaki dashes across the tarmac at London Airport and telephones to a British Working Man in, say, Throgmorton Street or Aldwych and says he wants to see him urgently about buying or selling some steel, or hand-embroidered neckties or whatever it is, and the British Working Man says "Absolutely, old man. Longing to see you." The German or Jap is just going to say "I can be there in an hour" when the British Working Man says "Just hold on while I look at my book."

If German or Jap were familiar with the country, his heart would sink with the sick realization that, for practical purposes, he has had it. Lacking this familiarity he waits hopefully—not

knowing that chances are the B.W.M. does not even have a book. And then the B.W.M. says "I tell you what, what about Wednesday week?" (Indeed, a Venus observer has written an entire survey of modern Britain entitled "What about Wednesday week?")

The German and Jap, who by now are more than ever wondering how they came to lose the war, hurry northwards to study British production methods—with the idea of stealing any little gimmick that appeals. They find the place full of more and more British Working Men not, for the time being, working, because, as they will explain if asked, the situation is such that if they work, pretty soon there will be no work for them to do.

Non-working, or what is called *striking*, they point out, is the best way to ensure continuous working.

Other Working Men's Defence mechanisms include:

"Know what I'm going to do? I'm going to leave all this to you chaps and just get down there in the country and think, think, *think*. Want to get this whole thing in perspective. See the whole concern steadily and see it whole, sort of thing."

"Shop Stewards' meeting at four."

And there was a Working Man in a huge government office who, accused the other day of leaving his desk too

frequently for the local bar, remarked that it was "pretty hard if a man can't slip out to buy a stamp now and again."

Working men who have been and are making an important contribution to the whole science of being a working man at all are salesmen at the British Industries Fair and similar junkets of the era.

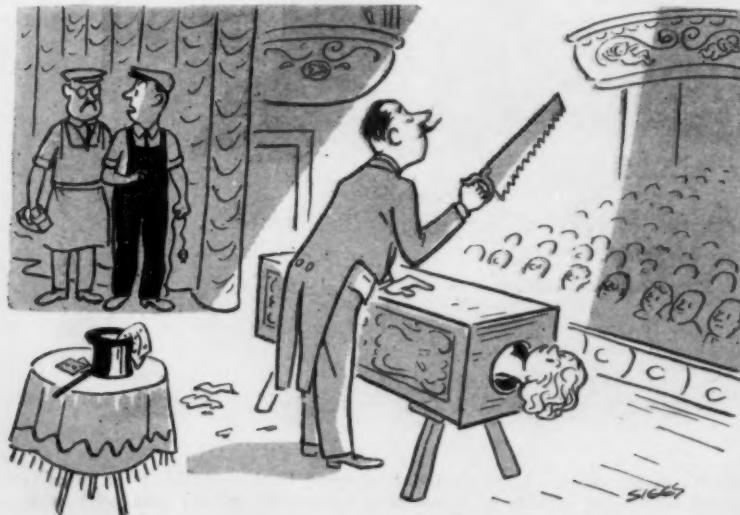
They were recently acclaimed by Mr. E. M. Clayson, president of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

He said that he had been "astonished"—this was no doubt meant ironically—at the scenes witnessed when he took distinguished visitors round the fair. On certain of the stands, he said, there were some salesmen who "just don't take the slightest notice of whoever may be going to the stand. They don't even bother to come out of their little cubby-holes at the back of the stand. They sit there doing their crossword puzzles and could not care less. If they are the people who complain they have not had enough visitors from overseas I can quite understand why."

Later, a salesman—name not given—told a reporter from one of the Sunday newspapers that the situation was natural enough. "Naturally," he said, "many of them regard the fair as more or less of a holiday."

It will be interesting to see what will be the reactions of the German industrialists who are shortly coming to London's machinery fair. What the Germans are interested in, and what they are principally interested in selling, are automative machines. They have already sold a lot of them, and are selling them faster and cheaper than the Americans. This makes the Germans feel good and hopeful. But what on earth happens when a thrusful German with a proud new automation notion who wants to buy a British bit of machinery to go with it finds that the British salesman just looks at him out of a little cubby hole and says "They appear to exemplify ornithological funk, six letters. Any ideas, chum?"

This is the situation—and the Germans and a lot of other people too, including the Massey-Harris Tractor Company and Mr. Thorneycroft, top Working Man at the Board of Trade, ought to take account of the fact—which confronts the unhappy automation boys as they wander in bewilderment on their first full scale trip to our land. (They



"Isn't that a carpenter's job?"

are not, I judge, going to get much aid or comfort from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research which has just spent three years writing more than one hundred pages saying that automation involves many problems, but is basically a Good Thing and nobody should be afraid of it. They seem to admit it doesn't look very alluring just at present, but will get more handsome as it grows up and be a good friend to us all.)

Last week rumours spread far and wide to the effect that the whole discussion of automation is in fact being conducted by an electronic brain, already installed secretly at some central point, and issuing statements in the name of trade union leaders, industrialists, leader writers, shop stewards, and deeper thinkers. Colour was lent to these reports by the fact that analysis of these statements showed that out of one thousand one hundred uttered during the past week, four hundred said exactly the same thing on one side and four hundred and fifty on the other were also identical. The remainder were unintelligible—it being supposed that something had gone wrong with the internal mechanism of the Brain. The word "Luddite" occurred in no fewer than seven hundred and twenty-five of the total, showing that at the present stage of development the brain has a limited vocabulary.

Meantime, a short guide to the Language of Automation Discussion is in the press. It is likely to be of the highest value as a means of simplification. It shows, for example, that in reality all types of automation language can be translated as the expression of one fairly simple idea.

What everyone in the country really means when he talks about "new techniques adoption of which imperative if Britain is to survive," or "threat of ever-spreading redundancy and industrial friction against which stand four square," is "If this darn thing is going to mean less and less hard work and a barrel of money for one and all more power to it, but we do hope it can all happen by magic, in the middle of the night, without waking anyone up."

Just as the roar of discussion reached what one hopes—quite vainly—is its climax, after which the technicians and engineers can silently get on with the



"You're getting warm."

job they are going to do anyway, Mr. R. C. A. Oates, headmaster of Crewkerne Grammar School, Somerset, considerably confused foreign observers and estimators of the British situation by announcing that what he has done in the present critical situation is to order two peacocks for the school. He felt, he was reported as stating, that they would "encourage future generations," serve as some kind of "symbol" of our way of life, and generally utter a protest against the drab and the humdrum.

He caused a lot of surprise by emphasizing that he had bought the birds with his own money—for some reason he seems to have thought that

the Board of Education and its subsidiary authorities might not immediately see the urgency of the need to put out more peacocks.

 3 3

Milestones

A GABERDINE ago we met;
A suit ago we dined.
A pair of shoes ago I set
The flighty past behind.

The tie before the last we kissed
With love so tender-hearted.
I often wonder what I missed
When furs ago we parted.

HAZEL TOWNSON

With the Satchmo

By CHARLES REID

THE hall was a peopled dimness, with spokes of light converging on a glittering square in the middle. The manager put the second-house attendance at nine thousand five hundred. Some who were invited hadn't shown up, and some who had bought tickets hadn't shown up either, but I couldn't see many empty seats, could I?

I peered into the dimness. The manager was right. The stadium was solidly paved with faces. So far as I could see they were, without exception, twenty-five-year-old faces, palely intent, to the last beard, on making up for lost chances. For remember: last time Louis Armstrong, or Satchmo (short for Satchel Mouth), played in England not one of them was a day over four. To-night it was to be Louis Armstrong or nothing. The hell with fill-up turns.

A bulky Negro with a wooden leg did tap dances, flung himself sideways, clapped his wooden and live extremities together in mid-air, bawled stale pleasantries into the mike and sweated with the labour of it all. His explanation that he wanted applause because he hoped for a new contract, and hoped for a new contract because he needed the money, wrung a reluctant laugh. A woman "pops" singer in too many yards of red and green swirled and slapped her hands and sang with a voice like a stonewall. She was badgered, booed, slow-clapped and, for decency's sake, counter-cheered. With the din at its peak, two

commissionaires carried on baskets of blooms. She clapped her hands and mouthed "Oh, what pretty flowers!" There were brutal shouts from the dimness: "Take them back!"

While this was happening Satchmo eyed himself approvingly in the dressing table mirror. He wore spectacle frames to tone with his dark chocolate skin and had a tight cloth over his newly-prinked hair. His smile was a white oblong framed with bicycle-tyre. During his smile, which went on for a long time, I looked speculatively at his teeth. It is on these that half his publicity and all his garrulous, bright trumpet playing depend. He had said to one interviewer, "Ah still got ma teeth." And to another, "If they're not all mine, at least they're paid for." The second version is obviously the truer one.

He shook my hand with the warmth of an evangelist. Then I heard his disastrous voice, that living klaxon, say that, being a journalist, I'd perhaps care to print an article by him. He pressed multigraphed stuff on me, adding, "See you spell it that good!" Back in my seat I saw it was a signed piece about losing weight the Satchmo way, with advertising plugs in underlined capitals. "In case you do get gas," advised Mr. Armstrong, "ol' B^{as}ma R^{ex} will straighten you. That's why she's on the Mound—to cut gas, grease and a lot of discomforts from a lot of foods and liquors that won't act right . . ."

And now, coned by spotlight, he was coming down the aisle, trumpet in one hand, handkerchief hanging from the other. As he walked he rolled and staggered with laughter and poked a conspiratorial finger at a stranger here, a stranger there, as though he and they had known each other for ages and were up to the neck in some practical joke that was coming off famously. He behaved in much the same way for the rest of the night, convulsed and ecstatic about fun which was little apparent to the rest of us.

On a platform that went round all the time like a slow joy wheel, Armstrong lined up with trombone and clarinet, while piano and drums toiled in the background, and took his turn, usually a modest one, at chorus breaks. The programme listed thirty-three numbers,

starting with "High Society" and ending with "Margie Lee." During the act he casually pulled half a dozen themes out of this bag and announced them, sometimes intelligibly, over the mike, in a voice like street cars being derailed. His trumpet had the old insolent ease. It cut like a stockwhip, sounded across plantations at sunset, once or twice went soggy with self-pity.

But what was missing? There used to be notes, as I dimly remember from records, that rose at a rocket's angle, white-hot and clean. There were notes that went on so long that the listener began to fight for breath. There were notes so insanely inflected and patterned that no trumpet on earth could possibly have produced them—yet there they were, making scars on your eardrums and your soul.

This happens no more, seemingly. Eye-rolling frenzy has checked out. Something mellow and polite has checked in on tip-toe. Trumpet breaks that wouldn't harm a fly, or make a fly do anything but purr, are fogged and fattened by stadium amplifiers, while men sit upstairs beneath eyeshades planning bigger and better plugs, concessions, rake-offs. Armstrong seems happy enough. He lends himself. With Velma Middleton, a mountainous coloured singer who wears brilliants and blue chiffon, he does a grotesque spooning act. With an arm round her shoulders, trumpet a-dangle at the end of it, he rolls his eyes like a Christie minstrel; tries, in the extremity of his coyness, to wheedle a hole in the floor with his patent-leather toe; and addresses his girl from the raw depths of his throat as "Baby!" the sound being that of a Diesel truck stripping its gears.

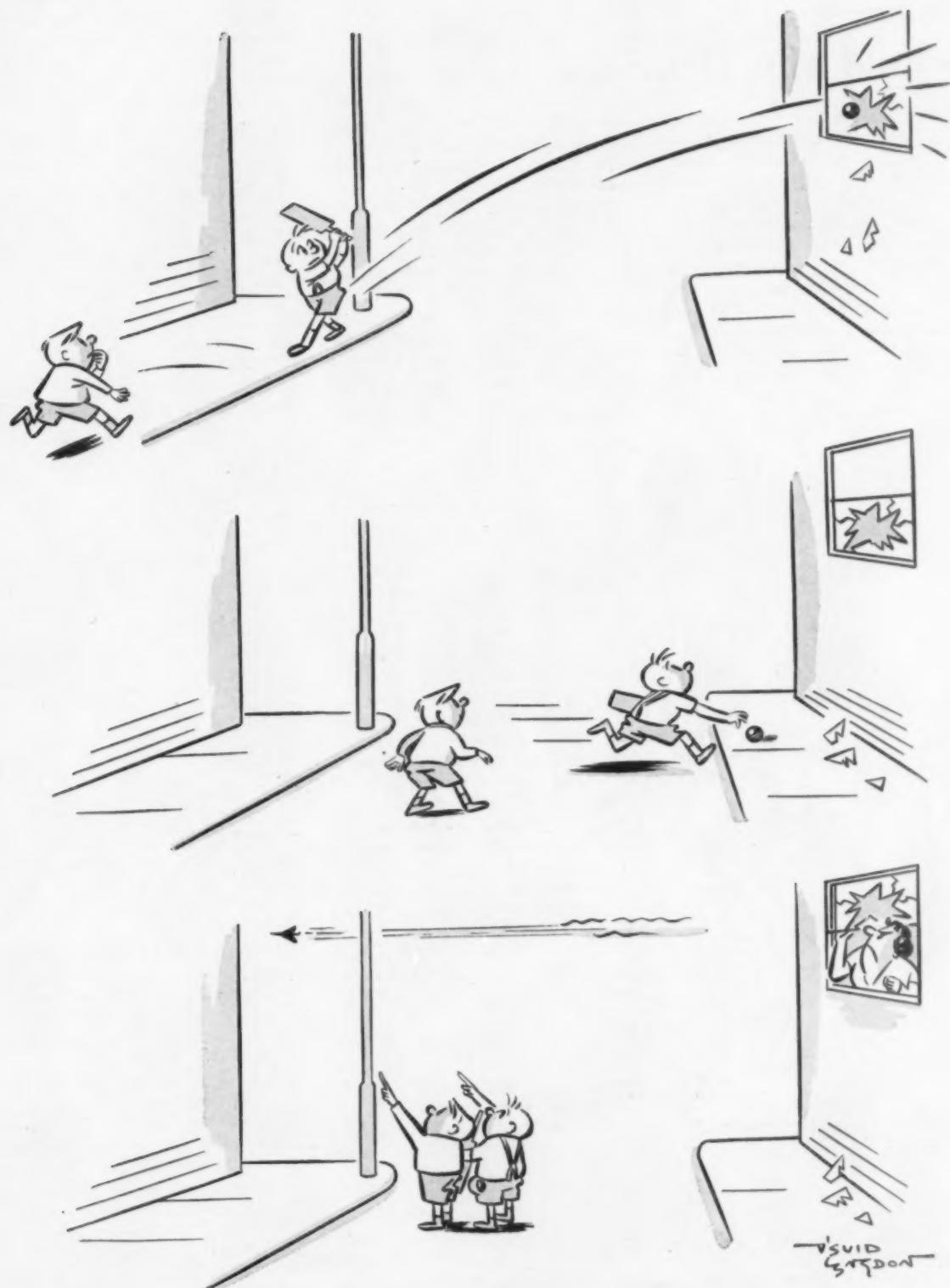
All this went down well with the twenty-five-year-olds. But an interloper from the Bunk Johnson Memorial base-mat at Plumstead was so upset by the impurity of the proceedings that he plucked his beard out by the handful, not a hard job.

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Gruesome Repast

"Every potato in Lincolnshire has a policeman's eye on it and the county force is very proud of its record in preventing thefts."—*Lincolnshire Echo*





Inside Scotland

Behold the Hebrides

By MARSHALL PUGH

THE Queen will be visiting the Western Isles this summer. It is not beyond the bounds of probability that private English visitors will follow the example, and it is high time, I'm thinking, that certain little misunderstandings about the islands were cleared up. In the past the influence of private visitors upon the islands has been shameful. When the English ruled the world with a velvet hand in an iron glove they made little attempt to understand the Scots. By their way of it we

were a Burns-bold brawl of maudlin, over-practical, Sabbatical, dour, drunkenly excitable, emigrating, homesickly music-hall comedians.

Misconceptions, formed at a time when English understanding meant a flag march with fixed bayonets through Peshawar, persist to this day, aggravated by mass communications. Is it surprising that they have been foisted as fact upon the simple island people? Consider the results in Mull and Barra. The islands, depending upon the cinema

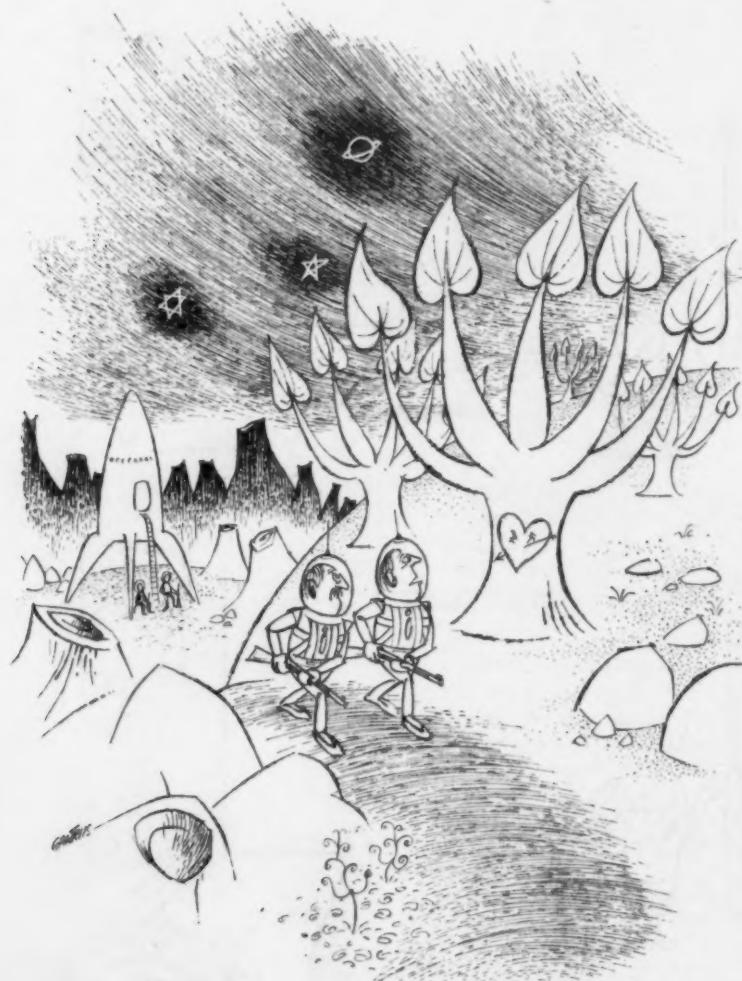
you patronize, are dark and damnable, where floating clansmen have their skulls picked clean by gannets; or high hilarious places where men break through the reservations of modern living like affable Apache war parties. The island cinema-goer may dismiss the first treatment as sheer ignorance of the habits of gannets, but the second goads him into coining unlikely phrases and searching with his phrases for cameras and extra work.

A Tobermory seaman that I know was tested for a bit part for *The Maggie*. They took him to Ealing and entertained him, changing the man for life. I have heard him say, in his Ealing-Scottish accent, "Kenny Macfarlane at the grocer's has never taken a drink in his life, but he's a decent fine man, for all that."

Now Ealing Studios have gone, to make way for television films that will not cross the Hebridean Sea, but the influence lingers still on Barra. There the s.s. *Politician* went ashore; her valuable cargo of whisky was hidden in the peat bogs and a film called *Whisky Galore* was made about it. Even now, a fresh bottle of whisky from Glasgow will sometimes acquire a light coating of peat. The more determined English visitor will be braved with such a bottle, and a toast "to the old *Politician*" drunk. An old local character actor, looking as fierce and expectant as a cormorant, will then mention Barra's greatest invisible export for the benefit of the slow.

Before the film was made on Barra the fairies had been absent from the island for a hundred years and more. But when it was on its second way round the circuits the *Daily Mirror* announced: *In the Celtic twilight on the brink of Britain, the fairies have been seen again.* . . . The black, buckled words skipped down the page, ending: *The eerie old Celtic legends—legends more potent than the story of the flying saucer—are coming to life again amid the dim Atlantic mists of these islands on the edge of the sea.*

The eerie old legend was launched by two children of Breavaig who alone saw three fairies in moss green. Since the children spoke no English the outside world relied for its information on



"... Anyway, it appears that they propagate their kind much the same way we do . . ."

certain residents of Barra's only public house, known far and wide to seamen as the Engine Room. But once it was in print, the belief was fast in spreading. Even the schoolmaster of Northbay—engaged on a three-volume work on penal servitude in Siberia, inspired by a detective dip into Dostoevsky—was convinced. But who could blame the Barra boys? Ealing, the visitors and the newspapers had convinced them that they were lawless and fey.

On the islands, according to the average lending library, strong and silent men fight for long-legged girls with hyphenated Christian names, sitting helpless at the venison-weary tables of traitors. By day speckled trout dance before the eyes, and the hills are sick of sunlight.

The direct effect on the islander is bad enough. Romances have contributed in no small measure to the islander adopting the Lowland habit of the kilt, a garment most unsuitable for the climate. The novelist's preoccupation with the poaching has the islander ever on the alert for deer, loitering with intent in the neighbourhood of Forestry Commission nurseries. But the indirect effect is even worse.

English readers arriving in boatloads in summer, singing Jacobite laments and looking as sad as sheep, are forever trying to convince the locals that there is more to the islands and the island way of life than the islanders themselves can see. When the Commissioner of Northern Lights last advertised for twenty assistant lightkeepers, two hundred Southern volunteers applied. Most of them were disqualified by their unsatisfactory answer to the first question: "Have you ever seen a Hebridean lighthouse?"

Still the Southern readers come. Some, in search of rapid fortunes, fish the sounds for basking sharks. Others look for a Spanish galleon under four centuries of silt at the bottom of Tobermory Bay. And the influence of the Southern settlers grows more powerful year by year. Take Tobermory. Before the galleon hunting began in earnest it was a fishing port. To-day it does not have a single fisherman, with the possible exception of Callum Robertson who sometimes sits on the pier, pointing out the position of the galleon, confused by all the goings-on.

"The galleon is right there," Callum

will say, fighting down his doubts, "and if you're impatient just go and dig it up for yourself. There are only ten thousand tons of shifting silt on top of it. But the men searching for it are not stupid, the fine intelligent men."

Councillor David Lowe of Tobermory Council can remember the times when there were other industries in Tobermory. Now he says "It would be better if we had something like the Loch Ness Monster—that's really there, you know. But if the galleon is dredged away, Providence will provide." He speaks with the Highland fatalism of Foyles.

In Tobermory much is made of the information that the buses do not run on Sundays. The fact that the buses do not run on three week-days is conveniently ignored. It is generally understood that there are no Sabbath boats from the mainland, and the newspaper boat is compelled to be discreet in landing *The People, Reynolds* and the locum minister for Craignure at the nearest sheltered point.

Is it to be wondered at that the islanders seem suspicious of visitors, appear furtive, oblique? The visitor's duty is plain. He should clear up the misunderstandings for himself, listening and looking with the caution of a psychical research worker. Even the means of travel must be planned with care.

Beyond my father's home the fields climb reluctantly to little hills which break the skyline and tickle the imagination. When I was seven I knew the tops of them and the hollow beyond, where a provisioner named Fousty Boab sold lemonade and doubtful doughnuts to the hiker. Glenogil was only a halt, for from the head of it I could see the Cairngorms.

North was Glen Clova where three tracks went up the hillside like frightened grouse for Ballater, Balmoral, Braemar and the roads to the isles. In the woods of Glen Clova I lay in my sleeping sack and my first long trousers, saying these names to the night, dreaming of the roads through Mull and Barra, Rhum, and Canna which is an island and a garden in the sea.

When I had walked the roads to the isles and walked the roads of the isles I knew nothing of the islands or the islanders. Walking is no way to knowledge. There are too many miles between facts.



Who Drops Names Drops Bricks

GOOD evening. The delay in starting this lecture has been caused by the unexpectedly large audience and the need to fix up a relaying apparatus to an overflow lecture-hall. Evidently the advertised subject—*Scientific Name Dropping*—has had an even wider appeal than was expected. But these are enough apologies, and to plunge at once into the subject, let us ask the gentleman in the third row why he is here this evening. You have just arrived from the country, having found that a visit which you hoped would include dinner, and even a bed for the night, ended abruptly in that Waste Land of time that lies between 5 and 6 p.m.? Did you perhaps say something to chill the air, and to cause your host to remind you rather briskly that you must leave at once if you wished to dine in London? You mentioned that you might be dining with a much-photographed acquaintance, and what is worse, you referred to him by his nickname? But this is a classical case of name-dropping gone wrong! No host with the spirit of a mouse would implore you to remain in those circumstances. Had you indicated that the idea of tearing yourself away with only such an unrewarding date in view was more than you could face with cheerfulness, you might at this moment be lolling in an armchair, respected as a most discriminating guest. Now, if by an evil chance your late host should meet your famous friend and compare notes about you, it will be no more than you deserve.

Let us ask the lady sadly leaning against the radiator what has made her so depressed. Do we understand, madam, that at a gathering of what might be called the middle layer of the academic world you made the elementary mistake of quoting a remark made to you personally by a Warden, known to be the ultimate umpire in academic circles? And were you really surprised that, except for some acid comments on your dress and deportment, you were shunned throughout the evening? There is an old proverb about taking hatchets to break eggs, which all who embark on a name-dropping career should bear in mind.

Are we right in thinking that the melancholy figure crouched in that dark corner under the gallery is a refugee from political life? Dear Sir, or Madam, as the case may be, don't tell us. We can guess from your expression what has happened. You fallaciously assumed that the selection committee of that particularly cosy constituency would be suitably impressed by your careless remark "As a man I know who lives at No. 10 Downing Street was saying . . ." Even you should have felt no surprise when they unanimously adopted one of your rivals, an unattractive personality with an unsavoury record.

These are examples picked at random to give the rest of the audience the assurance that they are not alone in their predicament. The average name-dropper is perpetually dropping a big name where a small one would do.

Never use a big gun on someone who can be knocked down with a feather, and a sliding rather than a dropping movement should be aimed at. As the audience appears to be in need of practical advice, here are three formulae that any intelligent student should be able to adapt to most circumstances:

FORMULA I. "I expect you know X. He told me to-day that he had discussed the matter with Y and that they think that Z's opinion would be valuable. Don't you think that is a { reasonable } idea?"

(An excellent example of dropping three names in three sentences, with a hint of intimacy with X, access to Y and reference to Z, which makes asking the listener's opinion a compliment, and leaves him with a sense of oiling the wheels of destiny.)

FORMULA II. "Personally I { do } { don't } agree with A on the subject. He always says B and C are both { overrated } { underrated }."

(Useful for those occasions when you have to force your way into the conversation, abandoning good taste, nice feeling and, if need be, truth.)

FORMULA III. "I have just been told by { Ignoto Unbekannt } { Sir Anon Anonson } that the Madame Inconnue { musical } { new share issue } { collection } will have a *succès de scandale*."

(This is a very reliable means of dropping a good name, as the idea of inside information disarms many suspicious listeners. Also all progressive name droppers must realize that they can only hope to cash in on the future.)

And now, having, I hope, been of some slight assistance to you all, I will conclude by quoting what someone called . . . really that overripe tomato was quite unnecessary . . . once said to me: "Always remember that name-dropping is a two-way traffic."

V. G. P.

 & &

"OLD WORLD COTTAGE in Devon near Creditors, 5 rooms, mains water." *Evening News*

Thanks, no.



Detective Fever

WHEN I get 'flu—which, rather late this year, I have just succeeded in doing—a curious thing happens.

I suck the thermometer for twice thirty seconds, gaze about at the clouds, the wall pattern, angle that elusive rod to the light, note down—h'm, serious!—103·5, smoke a cigarette from another world, and—(can't help it)—become a Famous Detective!

Whose heavy tread on the stair is that? Who bursts in looking for a poker to bend double and, finding none, contents himself with the lamp standard, which he leaves like a bowed snowdrop? Who, I wonder? Every year he comes.

Something has always prevented my following. Now it's the telephone, not with the expected news that a future Lord Privy Seal has hopelessly compromised himself in a holiday camp, but with silence and then, after $2\frac{1}{6}$ seconds, the receiver gently put down: Major Bassetji, no doubt, on the wait to go through my papers. Let him. They're all faked, even the wigmaker's bills.

But I slip out the back way, which at first-floor level gives on another street, in the hope of catching a sight of my visitor. No? Then he must have gone straight back to St. Pancras. He had that look. Really, I can't be bothered.

A something in the air—what is it?—a stir, a languor—

I'd better cross over. There's Hugo, made up as an old soak waiting for the pubs to open; but it's so in character, one wonders whether he is incog. or not. I do like a proper disguise! Bowler hat and hare lip—now, that's something. People take one startled glance—mind you, the lip must be pretty good—and don't like to look back; so the features escape examination. I employed it quite successfully in the Boilermakers' Union murders.

Taxi! Hey, taxi!

"Drive," I exclaim, "like the very devil!"

"Where to?"

"Oh—the Club: Detectives' Club."

He gives me a look. But I know more about him than he thinks.

My taximan cuts through Regent's Park. How exquisite are the new green and the almond; gibbons chirp, there

By G. W. STONIER

are red and white sails on the lake; it all takes me back to that open-air performance of *Hamlet*, with the July rain dripping on our umbrellas, and none of those littered about at the end ever able to get up again.

Why, here we are in dear old Northumberland Avenue! Dispirited inspectors wending their way back to groaning desks. Reminds me: Florian of the Yard is lunching with me to-day. Usual mess, I suppose, from which I shall have to pull him out.

And what about the Duchess's pearls, promised for 6.45 when the Duke comes back from Monte? In laying hold of them, much may depend on . . . a prime cut of beef!

Chuckling, and running up three steps at a time—there was a time when I did four—I slip into the lobby unobserved: fire almost out; smell of raincoats and old chair springs; Sherlock, with his three bullet holes from New Year's Eve, over the fire-place; Crippen's waistcoat under one case and Madeleine Smith's cocoa tin under another; and old Bulldog—white-haired and purple-cheeked—snuffling

his fourth pint. I can't keep back a grin at it all. "Hullo, old fruit," says the Bulldog, taking it to himself, "what are you having?" This is the signal to stand him his fifth pint: earned on the battlefield and on suburban stairways.

"Shall we join the committee?"

We are the last to take our places. Sexton, our elder, is in the chair; and there's Peter W.—poor old Peter, a bit past it with a glass of South African over which he murmurs "Margaux, 1927" ("Always dreaming about women," whispers the Bulldog in my ear loudly, "and no wonder—he's trying to write his memoirs without Harriet knowing"); Poirot stoking his fabulous moustaches, which of course haven't been real for years; that monkey fellow with the crinkly eyes—Reggie something or other; Dr. Fell, being wonderfully *somebody*, one wonders who . . .

"This—er—unfortunate matter of correspondence being tampered with," begins Sexton.

"I submit," says Peter languidly but with a slight twitch, "that far more important is the question of amateur



status: it should be taken first." This comes up at every meeting.

"The problem," begins Sexton again in his best manner, "as I apprehend it, Lord Peter—"

"Amateur status," growls Bulldog, "what does he take us for—chorus girls?"

"The little grey cells"—cries of "Oh!" but the little man goes on—"The little grey cells, the *psychologie*—*n'est-ce pas?*—where would they be without the dollairs?"

"Thirty pieces of silver!"—this of course from Peter; and Father Brown, like a dormouse, eyes closed, is heard to murmur "The widow's mite."

Then how about those who write for the Press? (Peter twitches unbearably.)

We are well away when William totters over to me gasping "Your guest, sir."

"Ah, the real pro—Florian of the Yard. You'll excuse me, gentlemen."

I hurry out to secure that window table with the View; and the rest scatter themselves behind us.

Florian is properly awed by the company but chats stoutly about a new Vice series he's doing, while on his extended cuff I see written "How about those b. pearls?"

"In the bag!" I scratch on a butter pat. He looks doubtful, but goes on about transvestism in Harrow.

"Your call, sir," says William with a shudder, "from Baghdad."

"Baghdad, eh?"

They are all furious. "Trace that call," mutters somebody.

As I pass the committee room I hear snoring; and there through the crack is Father Brown, still at his place (wise man!) with his head fallen forward.

One eye opens and looks at the door. It is the wrong colour.

In a single bound I am at his side. "Wake up, Father!" I exclaim; and stab him with a pin from my lapel. He collapses, with a low incredulous whistle.

* * * * *

"Do you want any lunch?" asks a remote bright voice. "It's—"

"No, no, I've just got away from it. Leave me!"

"Well, you needn't be so beastly."

* * * * *

He has collapsed, and it's a moment's work to rip down the cassock, peel off the mask—Pin-Stripe Joe!

"Gentlemen," I cry, "come here, all of you!"

But the stampede is the other way. One by one they flit past: Strangeways with his face of experience and a portion of cheddar, Sexton clutching a small bag, the Bulldog flourishing a rusty Colt, Peter muttering "Let loose the hounds," old Gideon doing a caper and blowing—"What's the matter with you all?" I demand. "Voice of Spring," says he with a chortle, "listen, my boy."

And up from the street comes the thin reviving cry of "Murder! Murder!"

Away they tumble, snatching at coats and newspapers, hailing taxis, storming telephone boxes, and I am about to follow when Florian lays a hand, used to such action, on my shoulder.

"Aren't you," he asks heavily, "rather forgetting the Duchess?"

"No, every moment is precious—like the pearls."

"And where, if I may ask, are we going?"

"Oh, Hatton Garden."

"Phew!"

But at Hatton Garden I smile and say "Straight on," and after zigzags "This'll do."

"Smithfield!"

I nod. A fat man in an apron accompanies us along avenues of beeves. Suddenly I halt, draw my penknife.

"Hey, guvnor, can't do that! Chopperoo's job!"

"I don't want to chop, all I have to do is make an incision."

"Slicer."

But no slicer is to be found. They've gone to football. The hours drag on.

At last a slicer appears. I mark the spot; he plunges . . . my forefinger explores the little hollow, and the pearls are—

"Gone!" Not one of my moments.

"Which leaves us," says Florian, "exactly 33½ minutes."

I have to think quicker than I have ever thought before.

"Of course, of course . . . Those are pearls that were his eyes. The thirteenth cod! Billingsgate, and drive like—"

* * * * *

"Here's the doctor, darling."

"I'm too busy—no, too ill—to see him."

"Well!"

"Oh, in a minute!"

* * * * *

But this time, I'm thinking—as cars dart into alleys at our approach, teddy-boys swarm up lamp-posts, a mat is pulled in and a door slammed—and there overhead is the Duke's plane homing—this time there must be no mistake, or it will be the hotel lounge and the chain store for good.



"Dorothy Dandridge, dusky 27-year-old star of the film 'Carmen Jones' is likely to find London a good stopping place . . ."

News Chronicle

"'Carmen Jones' came to town yesterday. And here she is—thirty-year-old Dorothy Dandridge . . ."—*Daily Mirror*

"Into London yesterday flew Dorothy Dandridge, the slim brown flame of 'Carmen Jones' . . . Said 32-year-old Miss Dandridge: 'I never knew what Carmen would do for me . . .'"—*Daily Express*

Anyway, it had better be quick.





"Quick, chaps! . . .



"Here comes the British Travel Association photographer."



Australia looked like getting the runs—until England



taking advantage of a helpful cross wind



managed to save the game.



Angels Unaware

By
TOM GIRTIN

OURS was quite an old Inn. Sometime during the 'thirties the Brewers had gone to work on it and had made it even older. The previous tenants had played up to them manfully and had gathered together a wonderful collection of wrought-iron taper holders, bog-oak grandfather clocks, mantraps, stage armour, bread troughs, scolds' bridles and horse brasses. They had also placed, just inside the front door, a fantastic lamp made out of a cresset welded on to the sharp end of a property halberd. We had done our best but the place still looked as though it were under the same management as "Ye Olde Tudor Teapotte" in the High Street.

This had two great advantages. The regular customers adored it. Strangers who, seeing the simple Georgian façade, were quite unprepared for what lurked within, stood spellbound: they were also trying to adjust their eyes to the dim, parchment-shaded, electric candle-light. This pause, just inside the front door, was long enough for us to be able to sum them up accurately before they reached the desk and plan their Reception accordingly.

We found that it soon became

second nature to us to forecast successfully their every demand—even to the drinks they would order in the bar. (Drinkers of Light Ale, for example, form a great unmistakable class all to themselves.) And although the vast majority were simple souls clearly conditioned by Parliamentary Government to taking what they were offered, not liking to be conspicuous, reluctant to cause a scene, putting up with it with a smile, demanding only fair shares for one and all—there were others.

The Man, for instance, who Knew the Place in the Old Days.

He was always anxious to establish this fact, usually as a prelude to cashing a small cheque. "We used to come here a lot," he would exclaim loudly to his companion, looking critically around him. "Place changed hands, though. They used to have a wonderful old lamp here. Must have been practically unique. Seems to have gone." Then he would shout across the hall "Do you still do lunches?" adding in a comparative undertone "Getting late. Might as well try it, now we're here."

We knew well that, before he left, after several whiskies with his meal, the sounds of battle with the Head Waiter

would be borne down the passage from the dining-room.

"I used to bring a lot of custom to this place! Good spenders! But I'm damned if I ever come here again. I know all about that! I don't mind telling you I'm going to do my damnedest to get a decent crowd back running this place. Commander Borage at the Brewery is an old friend of mine. And I'm well in with the Umbridge police. You ask Inspector Wilmot if he knows Frank Tucker. Just ask him, that's all. He'll tell you all about me. By God...!"

Then there were the little crowd who came over from Maidenhead. They revealed themselves instantly because the women all continued—even in the Tudor twilight—to wear dark glasses. They were always using the telephone—ringing one another up or being called out of the bar to take a message.

"Why! Hello, Emmy! Your ears must be burning! We were just talking about you, dear. Yes we were. Just that minute talking about you and saying what a lovely person you are... No, honestly, Emmy, of course we don't! We were just saying what a lovely person you are when the 'phone went... But of course I don't, Emmy! We none

of us do! No they don't, really, Emmy! Look, Emmy, the moment we do we'll tell you. That's a promise, Emmy! You know I'm a friend, Emmy dear, don't you? Well, the moment I think so, I'll ring you up one morning and say 'Look, Emmy, we don't think you're doing yourself justice'... No, Emmy, until I do that you'll know you're all right and just to carry right on the way you are doing. And, honestly, Emmy, we think you're a lovely person, we do really. We were just saying so when the telephone rang. Look, Emmy, why not come over now and we'll all have a little jinkie . . .'

It needed no training to know that if we had inadvertently reserved rooms for the night for any of them it would mean cigarette burns on every available polished surface, the sound of quarrelling—and perhaps of blows—at three in the morning and brandy spilt into the springs of the armchairs.

By way of contrast was the Enthusiast in Search of the Picturesque. He was usually a big, bland character with rimless spectacles, travelling either on his own or with his mother. He was delighted with everything. "Aha!" he would exclaim exultantly, rubbing his hands briskly together, "The blazing Yule Log! The Real British Traveller's Welcome!" Shown to his room he would murmur "Twixt sheets as sweet as lavender! You can't beat it! Not anywhere in the world! I don't care

where it is, you can't beat the true Old English Hostelry." The menu brought forth delighted cries of "Ah! The Roast Beef of Old England!" And he would add "But, before the Repast, a Flagon of Foaming Ale seems to be indicated, eh? Aha! Aha!"

Striding heartily across the bar, only momentarily brought up short by the crisp thwack of his skull against old oak—a swift, rueful smile to the other customers and a mock rubbing of his head showed them that he was the sort of man who could take in good part a crack across the Pate while jousting at Quarterstaves—he would cry out "Ah! Mine Host himself! Tell me, have you any Draught Ale? In a Pewter Pot? Splendid! Splendid! I'll have half a pint of Mild Beer, please. How much is all that?" And he would produce, with meticulous fingers, 6½d. from the secretive depths of a little leather purse.

Another lip-smacking type, though in quite a different manner, was represented by stout, Midland Mr. Broad who was fond of his food. He used to stay with us, for the fishing, two or three times a year and so felt himself entitled to demand a little extra attention.

"After all," he used to say, "it's we Regulars you want to encourage. Not the here to-day, gone to-morrow folk." He would look meaningfully at a harmless motorist and his wife who were spending the night on their way through to Cornwall. "No offence meant." He always chose the busiest moment in the dining-room to ask the new waitress if, while sticking to the table d'hôte menu, he could have just half a portion of the Egg Mayonnaise (but with a little extra lettuce and a tomato or two and just two or three pickled gherkins—but thinly



Mr. Broad

sliced, the gherkins) and to make up for it just a slice or two extra of the beef. No roast potatoes, though: if we hadn't any other sort of potatoes the shop down the road sold some smashing toasted things called "Yumlets" and it wouldn't take a moment for someone to run down and get some and heat them up. When his meat was brought he always picked up a specimen slice on his knife and minutely inspected the underside of it before smothering the whole plate with a sauce, provided specially for him, called "Evident Relish." At night, after an evening spent quietly drinking in the bar, he waited until the kitchen staff were safely in bed before saying "D'you think you could have a plate of sandwiches sent up to my room? Well, couldn't you cut me some yourself? You or your wife, I don't mind. After all we've had a long day, y'know." The top piece of bread was lifted from each sandwich and the contents surveyed. "Could I have some more mustard—quite a lot more mustard and a slice or two of cucumber. And if you have some pickled onions . . ."

From a little further north than Mr. Broad came a middle-aged woman who lived locally. Her confidential, childlike air had earned her, amongst the men on



Little Girlie

whom she practised her charming affectation, the sobriquet of "Little Girlie," and whenever she came in we knew that two things were going to occur. First she would come over to the desk and, leaning over, confide in a thrilling whisper to my tie:

"I want to book two rooms for Mummy and Daddy!" Her bright red hair tickled my nostrils, making me want to sneeze. "They're driving down from Huddersfield . . ." and here she would raise her voice ". . . in Daddy's *Rolls-Bentley*." Her eyelids, puffy though they were, fluttered wildly at me. "You *will* see that everything's extra-special, now, won't you? They're only used, you see, to mixing with ladies and gentlemen."

This business transacted, she would call for a double Scotch to be sent into the lounge. "None of that stuff you serve just to anyone: I want some out of *our* Special Bottle . . ." Here she would contort her face into a fearsome wink. She was referring to the bottle I did, in fact, keep specially and exclusively for her. "There's no comparison," she would say. "Not being a whisky drinker you wouldn't know what a difference there is between this . . ." she rolled it round her tongue appreciatively ". . . and t'other old muck."

I agreed with her—the Special Bottle,

as it happened, contained exactly the same whisky that everyone else was enjoying—and she would return to the previous business: "I hope there'll be room in your garage for the *Rolls-Bentley*: it's rather a large one y'know. Daddy's pretty solid . . ."

Every now and then couples who were more immediately identifiable than any others used to arrive. These were fellow Licensed Victuallers on their way to some Trade Congress or other. There was no single common denominator amongst the men—though many of them were on the bulky side. It was the women who betrayed them. Some were inclined to generous bosoms to which they pinned, upside down, sprays of mauve orchids. Some were wreathed in silver-fox furs. Some were elaborately coiffed above heavy features that made them look like female-impersonators. But all alike shared the one revealing characteristic: a hard glittering stare—not unlike that of an inspecting General advancing towards a swill-bin—that instantly saw and recorded the smallest details. This unflickering gaze silently took in the tiny burn in the bedroom hearth-rug (which should have been covered by the edge of the log-basket), the size of a double gin, the bottle from which it was poured, the furnishing of the dining-room. Suddenly we found the whole place was looking rather shabby, and if anything went wrong in the kitchen that night it was, inevitably, they who were the victims of the mishap.

So the procession of types came and paused in bewilderment and went their way again. A woman with a leathery face and her eyes perpetually screwed up to keep out the smoke of her



In search of the picturesque

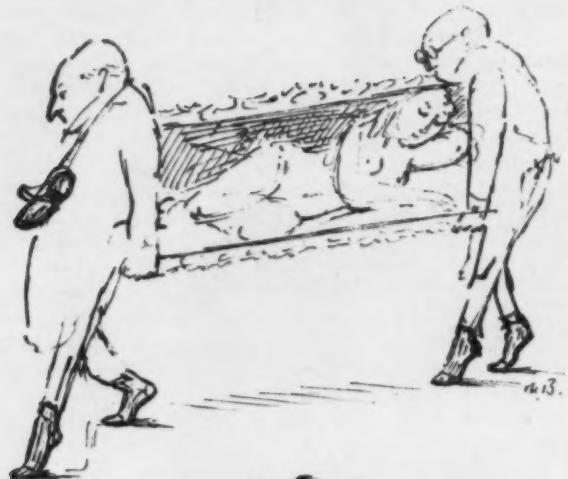
yellowing cigarette-butt meant that a car-load of dachshunds, a few of them house-trained, on their way back from Crufts, was about to burst in, yipping, upon us. Every now and again Guides would enter, driving before them parties of overseas visitors on their darting flight from Windsor to Stratford. On these occasions the Guide would often ask me to give his short talk, on the history of the place, for him. Once, while I was doing so, I overheard one of the group whisper with horrified fascination to his wife as he pointed at mine "That'll be a Barmaid: you've heard about *Them*!" Though their schedule allowed no time for a meal they would usually have a small gingerale between them—and now and again a brown ale as well, just to be able to say they had tasted genuine English beer.

Now that we're no longer in the Trade we have time to go away and stay at other peoples' Inns. Wherever we go we notice a familiar look in the Proprietor's eye as we cross the hall. We hasten to show him that he needn't think he can try it on with us.

"We used to be in this line ourselves," we say casually.



. . . who knew the place in the old days . . .



SUMMER EXHIBITION



PUNCH PLAN FOR LONDON

IT is time this matter was settled. From the Abercrombie Plan down to the Barbican Scheme, the Holford Plan for St. Paul's and the *Evening News* Thames Boulevarde, a stream of contradictory and impractical solutions of the capital's difficulties has poured into the waters of Lethe. Londoners are tired of looking at models of flyover bridges, highways on stilts, underground garages, airports on station roofs, skyscrapers, and hundreds of little indiarubber trees to give freshness and verisimilitude. What is now wanted is a bold overall plan for London and the City, wide enough in scope to settle all outstanding difficulties and designed to strangle all foreseeable objections at birth. The Punch Plan, prepared by a team of experts, fully meets these requirements, and is offered to the authorities without charge.

The problem is fivefold:

1. How to get the traffic flowing;
2. How to provide adequate parking places;
3. What to do with the bombed areas round the Barbican and near St. Paul's;

4. How to get over the objections raised by the Fine Arts Council, Mr. John Betjeman and others to any proposal to pull down anything anywhere;

5. Where to put Temple Bar.

A feature of the Plan is that it kills two or more of these birds with one stone. Thus the proposal to move all masterpieces of Victorian architecture to vacant sites in the City (see page 589) deals at a single stroke with Problems 3 and 4, and at the same time creates a number of new vacant sites for use as parking places or heliports. The closing of all Thames bridges by means of existing equestrian statues (page 588) not only helps towards a solution of Problem 1 by stopping the infiltration of traffic from South of the river to North, and vice versa, but also makes valuable car-space available in the streets in which the statues now stand (Problem 2). The imaginative Pagoda of Arches (page 590), besides providing Londoners with a striking new landmark worthy of their great city, removes the intolerable bottlenecks at present caused by the Victory Arch and the Marble Arch and

also settles for all time the vexed Problem 5.

The highlight of the Plan is, however, the diversion of the Thames at Kingston and the use of its existing bed as a great arterial highway along which traffic can run at speed from Richmond to Tilbury and, of course, back (pages 588 and 589). Outlets to north and south will be provided at five-mile intervals to compensate for the closing of the bridges. The new course of the river is a matter for discussion with interested local authorities, but it seems likely that it will flow due south through Surrey and Sussex, where it should be well received, and empty itself into the English Channel. Worthing may well have a glittering future as England's premier port.

Copies of the full Plan, of which it has been possible to give only an outline here, have been sent to leaders of thought, art and industry in this country and overseas. The selection of their comments given below is an indication of the enthusiastic acclamation with which the Punch Plan for London is being greeted on every hand.

WIDESPREAD APPRECIATION

SIR,—Artistically, the plan is preposterous. The Thames to turn to motor-cars? Ludicrous. I suppose we shall have motoring correspondents sitting astride the Cleopatra sphinxes, where once a water-colourist could soothe his spirit with the interplay of barge and bridge. Practically, the thing is equally absurd. I suppose you realize that the City will be choked to a standstill with Barbican sightseers? At present their shrines are at least dotted economically about; their concentration in an area of a few hundred square yards would mean daily baton charges by mounted police. Yours, etc., A. E. Richardson, P.R.A.

SIR,—The plan is ingenious, but is it necessary? There is no need to divert rivers and move buildings. What is wanted is a less cumbersome form of transport. Why not camels? Yours, etc., John Glubb (Pasha, Rtd.).

SIR,—I write to express the strongest possible disapproval of the so-called Punch Plan for London, shown to me by a friend. Before actually diverting the Thames I trust you will arrange suitable compensation for the owners of old-established waterside industries whose livelihood you propose so peremptorily to destroy. Yours, etc., D. J. Whitsun-Creel, Hon. Secretary, National Association of Worm, Grub and Gentle Farmers.

SIR,—The plan can only prove of the grossest disservice to music-lovers. The Royal Festival Hall, as you must know, was built on its present site because of the nearly echoless quality of tidal river water. Even now, however, when petrol tankers or other large craft pass the building, the notes of wood-wind instruments tend to rebound with a faint double intonation. What will the effect be when the Beethoven Fifth is bounced back into the auditorium throughout, ricocheting from the sheet-metal of unbroken motor traffic? Yours, etc., Cranberry H. Whelk. (Author: "A Short Analysis of Polyphonic Acoustics.")

SIR,—Re Thames diversion, this may work, but I know from experience that swans do not divert easy, and may well persist in frequenting the course of the river even when it has turned to bus-routes, etc. I just mention this. Though naturally it will render them simpler for upping. Yours, etc., F. T. Turk, Keeper of the Swans.

SIR,—The economics of your Thames diversion plan are, of course, no concern of mine. I hope, however, that I may send you the artist's bill for revising our annual plan of the Boat Race course? Yours, etc., Editor, *Radio Times*.

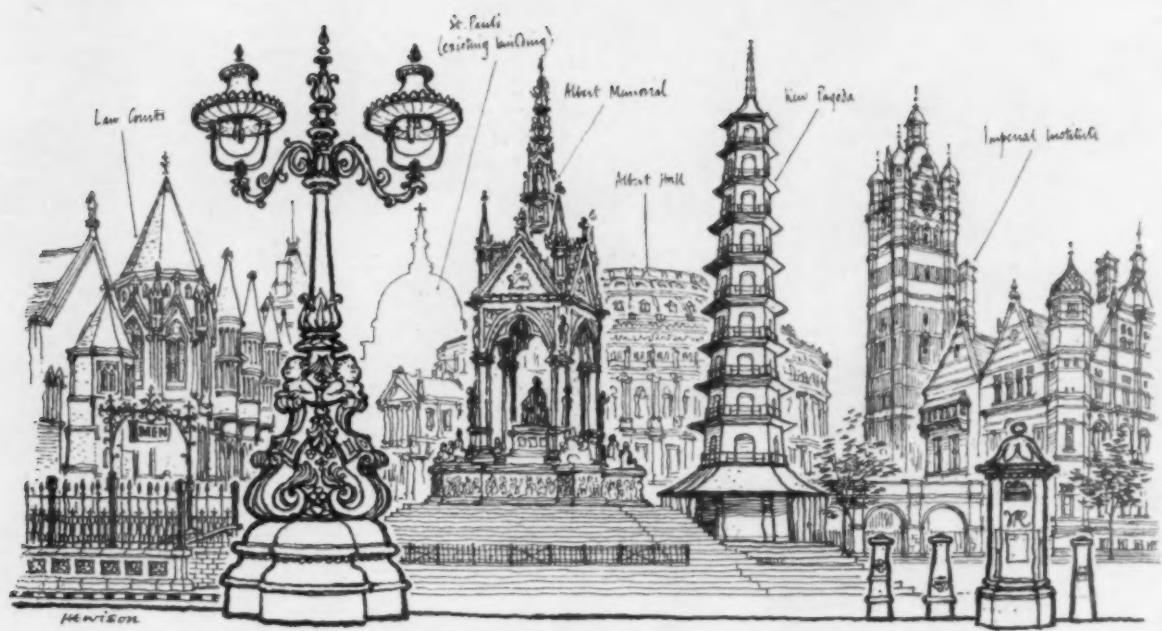
SIR,—I cannot too emphatically urge the enlistment of skilled architectural advice before you proceed with your



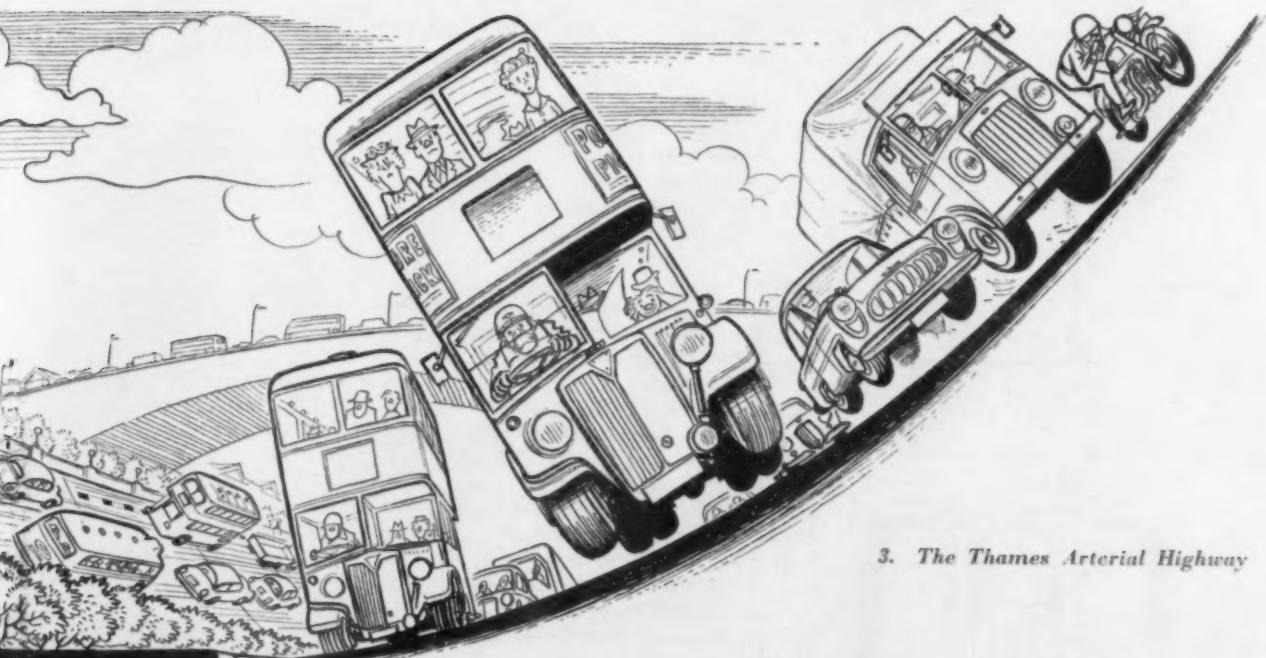
1. *Method of closing Thames bridges to traffic*



THE PUNCH PLATE



2. *The "Betjeman" Barbican scheme*



3. *The Thames Arterial Highway*



4. Disposal of Awkward Arches

proposed pagoda of arches. Children do not think, and are bound to climb it, if only to carve their initials or leave objects on the summit. I understand from a friend who knows about these matters that the dimensions of an arch are not necessarily commensurate with its strength, and that if, for example, you selected the Marble Arch as the base, there could be no guarantee that it would not crack and become unsafe very speedily: and once the structure was up it would be no easy task to replace it with another. I do most urgently beg you to have reliable tests made. Yours, etc., Ethel Pudd Creasey, Chairman, Children's National Free Play Vigilance Association.

SIR,—In planning the transplanted pattern of the Barbican buildings consideration will be given, I trust, to the provision of a pleasing effect when seen from the City of London's own cathedral church. Yours, etc., A. J. Ballance, Hon. Secretary, Friends of the View from the Top of St. Paul's.

SIR,—Except for its imaginative disposal of statuary the Punch Plan for London is not, of course, new. I enclose a privately printed pamphlet containing plans and diagrams of a scheme of my own, proposed towards the end of the last century, which differs little, beyond the suggestion that the actual roadways should hang from balloons. Should you care to adopt it now, the arrangements for the watering and stabling of horses could be largely disregarded. At the time of its conception the plan was rejected by the last Gladstone government, on the ground that an official alternative was already in being. As I recall, this was not highly practical, being based on demolishing an X-shaped section of property in the heart of London, and housing displaced residents in the (then) Crystal Palace. You will, I am sure, be interested to know that my father's first wife was a distant connection of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Yours, etc., Julian M. Gracely (Rev.).

SIR,—A well-placed enemy bomb on your Barbican pot-pourri would at one blow deprive Londoners of their architectural heritage, to say nothing of (for he would never be far away) Mr. John Betjeman. Yours, etc., G. de J. Wartspfetter (Lt.-Gen., retd.).

SIR,—Chancing unexpectedly on a copy of your New London Plan, albeit crumpled, I write to express my particular interest in your scheme to empty the Thames. As I am at present writing a definitive work on Roman Bottle Design, may I formally apply for facilities to go through the dredgings before disposal? Yours, etc., Ronald Pockney.

SIR,—I have had a quiet smile over your grandiose notions about diverting the Thames. This is what I call enthusiasm without information. Information herewith. Contrary to popular ignorant belief, the buildings on river bank are not maintained in the vertical by the embankments, but by the stability of the water flowing between them. Your road-on-the-river-bed sounds all very well in theory, and may enlist a little numskull support. But what in fact you will have on the river bed, once the river has been removed, will be the Shot Tower, the Shell Mex Building, the Savoy Hotel and, of course, the Houses of Parliament. Yours, etc., Bernard Goss-Fantail, B.A.



THE SEA

AFFAIR



Homo Navigans

By R. G. G. PRICE

ALTHOUGH Lewis Carroll disliked the sea even more than an umbrella for three, this lack of appreciation is unusual among writers. The sea has had a far better press than the land. It is true that Mr. Nicholas Monsarrat has called it *The Cruel Sea*, but this is Swinburnian rather than denunciatory. People never refer to any part of the sea in the tone in which they refer to the Sahara or Birmingham. Poets are particularly pro-sea, probably because it is as fertile in metaphors as in fish. It should be remembered in any attempt to balance sea and land that originally life crawled out of the sea. It did not begin in forests or wolds.

This is why Early Man felt some sympathy for the sea and tried to tame it to his purposes, the normal human way of showing sympathy, long before taming mountains or the rich. Roads needed spades and chain-gangs and a straight eye, sea-routes only coracles. Memory paints these as being like baskets covered with leather. I suppose there may be bits of coracle littering the sea-floor still. Their use lasted from near-simian times to the depopulation of the Gaelic islands. They were not the best sort of boat, lacking elegance, brio and a Paul Nash in the bar.

When Early Man gave way to the Ancients, triremes packed with javelin men or jars or corded bales scuttled up and down the wine-dark sea, distributing oak-trees, the alphabet and legends of the gods. Sometimes they would pause while gigantic fish were caught for the dinners of emperors and the sneers of satirists. Sometimes they would ram other craft with their practicable figure-heads. Sometimes they would even sail below the earth, with the night sun and the day moon, through the chilly judgment halls and, on emerging, dodge between clashing rocks, virgin-freighted dolphins and amphibious sea-kings. Rather unfairly, the older type of seafarer gets labelled as Phœnician (good) or Viking (bad). Part of the trouble about Vikings was that they used to land and seize horses and become cavalry, and the nautical equestrian is of course a traditional peril. Also they used to set fire to buildings that from other parts of the history book sound non-inflammable.

In the meantime, peacefully remote from the kinds of history studied in Europe, the races of the other continents were gently migrating. To and fro they floated on their balsa-wood rafts, inextricably confusing the ethnologists,

comforting the diffusionists, ensuring that the origins of everything were somewhere else. While the population of Asia went to Polynesia, the population of Africa went to Asia, passing the population of America on its way to Africa, and *a fortiori vice versa*. A by-product of this restlessness was the tendency to go and live in America centuries before it was officially discovered by Columbus.

Trade, war and fishing make up maritime history. The Middle Ages were apt at trade and the more legal sides of fishing, but their wars were clumsy. They would insist on cramming their ships so. Only two mediæval sea-battles have got into the textbooks of English history, and instead of these being full of tacking and getting opponents off-side they seem to have depended on getting the enemy stuck on sandbanks and then throwing quicklime at them.

The Crusades were an odd episode in the history of transport, whatever they may have been in the history of warfare or pastoral theology. To begin with the Crusaders walked, suffering a good deal of attrition from wolves, blizzards and Hungarians. Later came detached marine episodes, usually the conquest

of Cyprus; but it was the Fourth Crusade that really brought the sea into the picture as an Historical Cause. The Crusaders chartered a fleet from the Venetians, and these, as befitted a people that had mastered the art of book-keeping by double-entry ahead of their competitors, insisted that the Crusaders paid for the full number of passages ordered. The Crusaders found this impolite; but they settled with payment in kind, the kind being a quarter of Constantinople. The Doge accompanied his customers to take delivery. Now what is indubitable is that if the Crusaders had gone by horse, whoever got a quarter of Constantinople it would not have been the Venetians. There is a temptation to leave the Middle Ages here, not even quoting Chaucer's *Shipmanne*, and get on to the time when the sea's history really got going, I mean when We made it; but historical truth demands a reminder that in the fifteenth century the Portuguese were busily exploring, urged on by Prince Henry the Navigator. He was, I am thankful to say, half-English and a cousin of our and Sir Laurence Olivier's Henry V.

One important function of the sea was the bearing of Pretenders to claim the Throne from their living subjects. If Britain had been encompassed by mountains, the title-holder could easily guess which pass the challenger would arrive by. As it was, a Pretender might well start from the Burgundian court in the Low countries, spend a season or two in Ireland and then land in Wales, while the King was wildly calling out the northern earls to repel a landing in Yorkshire that never took place. Long before Admiral Mahan, the Pretenders had grasped the importance of sea-power. William the Conqueror, one of the first and best of the Pretenders, landed in the South just after some Scandinavians had landed in the North, thus making Harold walk the length of England and naturally arrive flustered and in no condition to detect strategems.

Anyone standing on a headland in the fifteen-hundreds might well have seen caravels and argosies loaded with pieces of eight. This made them heavy. It has been noticeably harder to rifle Spanish galleons, sunk far down under the weight of treasure, than to rifle Graeco-Roman galleys with their lighter

weighing ceramics. The observer might also have seen coasters carrying coals to Newcastle, herrings to Yarmouth and New Forest timber to Southampton. He might have noticed little boats circumnavigating the world, a mutineer at every yard-arm, and also large, sluggish ships connecting the various parts of the Hapsburg Empire. There would have been fights between ships like mastiffs and ships like whippets. It is unlikely that one would have seen the Virgin Queen being recited to in a State barge, but there was always a chance of seeing some great captain returning after defeat by the Irish.

In the seventeenth century, from Hudson's Bay to Malabar, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, Germans and neutrals sped about the globe shifting cargoes of spice. The sea had become sordidly commercial, a fate later to overtake the Cornmarket at Oxford. Neptune and Proteus and mermaids migrated from billows and rocks to a quieter life in tapestries. The Dutch sailed into the Narrow Seas bearing brooms, changes of king or cargo at ultra-competitive rates. Affronted by Stuart attempts to put down country sports, a company of keen witch-burners sailed in a ship with an inappropriately spring-like name to a land where the local law was more sympathetic. The incessant discovery of Australia began.

Had I time to linger with the Viceroys of Eldorado or the sober predikants of the Cape of Good Hope I could be middling picturesque about them too; but I must be on to the rivalries of Britain and Spain in the Western Mediterranean and the importance of sea-power in driving the French out of North America—the French government, at any rate. Throughout the eighteenth century homeward-bound nabobs, bright yellow, passed outward-bound explorers agog to discover the South Pacific. The sea, which had got into British blood at the time of Drake and into the blood of the human race generally at an earlier stage of evolution, now bred a breed of teak-like admirals. Anson, St. Vincent, Hawke, Nelson, all invented new methods of serving rum and a way of fighting battles by sailing at the enemy instead of side by side with them.

Napoleon was defeated because, while the British Navy was landing generals

here, there and everywhere, he was tediously leading his army through snow on its stomach. In the years that followed, the most important marine events were supersessions—sail by steam, wooden walls by iron hulls, paddles by screws, also coaching by yachting. However, the best known marine events were probably George IV's bathes to the sound of a band playing *God Save the King*. I do not understand why people



express such surprise at the presence of a band at the seaside, and surely one would expect its repertoire to be limited in the days before Sousa, Sullivan, Sidney Jones and Vincent Youmans. In the nineteenth century dirty British coasters were passed snootily by the sparkling turn-outs of the Royal Yacht Squadron. Slaves were replaced by emigrants, both steerage. Not only were cheap tin trays pouring out of England but they were being replaced by the loot of John Company, mainly cheap brass trays. As Home Waters became more peaceful, more types of warship could be seen in them. Bearded swimmers breasted the tide. On the wild winds could be heard the ozone-drenched jollity of pierrots and niggers.

In the nineteenth century, with the spread of pianos into parlours, Man began to sing about the sea. Songs were either about landsmen who wanted to adopt a life on the ocean wave or about seafaring men who now wished to be on land, usually the warmer parts of the Americas. These were sung only when weighing anchor. I do not know what was sung on board at other times, perhaps *lieder*, perhaps spirituals, perhaps those dreadful Victorian comic songs about ageing pantomime Principal Boys.

With the turn of the century, shipping becomes frantic. To and fro whizz raw

materials, manufactured goods and the smart set. Ever larger grow the passenger ships and ever nearer to being half-timbered. The sea gets crowded, at least on top. Lower down there is a possibility of the population's getting too thin; there is talk of protecting whales as though they were okapis or houses built by William Kent for Lord Burlington and Lord Burlington for William Kent. However, the marine population is slightly increased by the growing tendency of Egyptians to swim the Straits of Dover. From the point of view of free movement of shipping, it is a good thing that swimming canals had never caught on. These canals began to replace Capes less than a hundred years ago. First came the Suez Canal, which removed the Cape of Good Hope from nautical literature. Its builder, de Lesseps, told Thackeray's daughter that it had been suggested to him by Sarah Bernhardt. (I think, on reflection, that this is one of the oddest facts I know. Runners-up are that

U.S.A. north of Canada, or, to be more homely, as Waterloo Station's being north of Hyde Park Corner. Sea stories are less concerned in this century with marooning and keel-hauling than ever before. In some ways the strongest single influence on them is *The Loom of Youth*. War and shipwreck apart (and modern disaster is a little outside my literary range) there is nothing so noteworthy in the recent history of shipping as the growing tendency to go by air. Man is no longer condemned to uneasy motion on the bosom of the deep, to delays at ports, to being the hapless sport of fogs and gales. He flies through the air with the greatest of ease. Man's pard-like progress through the atmosphere has made the sea as obsolete as railways made the road. Bulk imports and exports may still lumber about the main, but the air is the appropriate mode of transport for class goods like diamonds and drugs and small, electronic things. Air travel has also greatly increased

sheer and uninhabited except for samphire gatherers and persons televising gulls, or else shelve so that the sea can periodically take its ease by lying snug on a bit of land. Leaving aside the development of the pier road and the problem presented by the kind of mind that likes to park its car on shingle, let us come to Common Objects of the Seashore. These are left behind as the tide recedes and show what the sea can do by way of containing matter in suspension while still remaining a fluid; soup is nothing to the sea. Common Objects include creatures that are called fish but do not fulfil the usual criteria: starfish and jellyfish do not lead to boasting or batter. Then there are pieces of bicycle tyre. Perhaps these result from the custom of riding off the ends of piers alight. Messages in bottles are rarer on shores than in funny drawings. There is a plethora of seaweed.

Man is rapidly exhausting the possibilities of the sea's surface and more and more is taking his fun below it, where globular, incandescent things peer at him over the summits of submarine mountains or through the gaping plates of wrecks, soon becoming accustomed to his diagonal postures. Sharks live up to their new reputation for avoiding fracas. Whales stave in cine-cameras and upset easels and blow bubbles back into man's air-conditioning, but not in malice; Captain Ahab might well have taken a friendlier view of Moby Dick if he had been in a position to scratch his soft underbelly as he passed. Soon the sea-floor will be as crowded as the sea-coast. After all, man is a restless creature, which has got him where he is. He might flee the dangers of the land by becoming a marine animal again, making breathing equipment in submarine forges, getting his vitamins from plankton and his power from radioactive salts of the sea. Misers would squat in the holds of treasure ships. Hunters for the pot would shoot upwards at plaice instead of at pigeons. It would become not only possible to receive radio programmes on the seabed but impossible not to. The behaviour of the human race might well drive some more sensitive and aspiring form of life out over the scummy rim of the water on to the sand, up the cliff, among the trees . . .



C. B. Cochran and Aubrey Beardsley shared a study at school and that Robertson Hare played in Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex*.) Then came the Panama Canal, which struck a much more serious blow at sea stories by replacing Cape Horn. However, it added slightly to gaiety by running east from the Atlantic to the Pacific and providing a conversational catch as sure-fire as those nineteen states of the

knowledge of the interior of Newfoundland. On the other hand, shipping is used more and more not to get from one place to another but simply to get away from home. The circular tour in search of a better climate than Britain's, commonly called a cruise, is really quite extraordinarily popular considering it is the last stronghold of compulsory games.

Where you get seas you get coasts, generally speaking. These either rise

The Sea Affair

Beyond the Edge of the Sea

In "The Sea Around Us" Rachel Carson dealt with the waters of the sea itself. In "Under the Sea Wind" she dealt with the life that inhabits the sea. In her latest book, "The Edge of the Sea," she deals with the things that creep and burrow in the shallows and wet sands of the intertidal zone. Her next step, obviously, must be to come right out of the water and throw the sharp searchlight of her prose style on the multiform life that heaves and wallows above the high-tide mark.

ALL morning the sea moved restlessly up the beach, wetting the infinitesimally small particles of sand wherever it touched them. Later it would withdraw again in obedience to the rhythmic tide-pulses beating far out in the measureless abyss.

The sand dunes lay motionless beneath the life-giving warmth of the noon-day sun, unfretted by the whispering advance of the sea. The cyclic pattern of the ocean's oscillation scarcely influenced them. The marram grasses that grew scantily on their scorching flanks knew nothing of the fierce surge and swirl of waters in the narrow gorges of the Continental Shelf, the swift rush of copepods startled by schools of tuna, the chill currents that pour down from Labrador into the warmer waters of the Caribbean. The dunes, to cut a couple of paragraphs short, were above high-water mark.

Yet even here the miracle of life had taken root, undeterred by the barren crystalline sands, the minuscule detritus of the Pleistocene Age. Inconceivably complicated organisms, from five to six feet long, lay here and there in the cups and hollows of the sand, their abdomens rising and falling in response to the rhythmic movement of their hidden lungs. Far out at sea, beyond the line of frothing white where the eager waters tumbled over the bar, urged onwards by the insistent pull of sun and moon, a school of mullet leaped into the air in a vain attempt to escape the onset of innumerable ctenophores. But the creatures on the sand dunes were comatose and the vibrations of the slaughter passed them by. Their faces, for the most part, were covered beneath a thick white layer of newspaper.

A little later, as the tide began to turn, Homunculus felt the gnawing pangs of

hunger and sought about blindly in his trouser pocket for a packet of sandwiches. Soon his broad blunt teeth were rending and tearing at the defenceless delicacy, the hinged lower jaw sweeping irresistibly upwards to meet its fellow. Others of his tribe, spurred by

the same mysterious instinct, roused themselves to fill their bellies, and before long the sand dunes were alive with soft rustlings and the tap-tapping of hard-boiled eggs on hundreds of osseous knees. As they ate, Larus the herring gull passed directly overhead, riding effort-

lessly on the warm up-currents of the supratidal strand, and the creatures of the sand dunes cowered down in momentary apprehension. But the subtle alchemy of Larus's digestive processes had not yet completed its mysterious cycle. In a little while the spectacular rotatory movement of powerful jaws was resumed all down the long line of age-old dunes.

Afterwards a lull of repletion fell over the beach. Homunculus slept, his tentacle-like appendages folded over his distended abdomen. Only the young ones roamed about, some venturing into the intertidal zone as the sea ebbed or prodding about in the sands with their curiously shaped spades. Others strayed inland, where they fell an easy prey to the ice-cream man's mysterious cycle.

Now the shallow waters at the sea's rim boiled with deadly menace. Hundreds of thousands of sand eels pursuing millions of copepods had in turn been pursued by innumerable whiting fleeing from their voracious enemies the squids. Hunger and desperation banished the fishes' fear of



shoaling water, and in an instant, as the tide ebbed sharply, the drying sands were piled feet deep with countless copepods, sand eels, whiting, squid and giant bluefish. Killer whales, robbed of their prey, spouted angrily offshore.

Homunculus's mate, idly watching the curious scene, drove the lower end of her articulated humerus sharply into the yielding tissues of his intercostal zone. He opened his eyes, instinctively withdrawing the lids behind their protective superciliary arches, and turned them in the direction of her pointing finger. Already, down by the sea's edge, hundreds and thousands of gulls and skuas were tearing with their steel-hard bills at the quivering flesh of the stranded fish. "What goes on?" the woman asked. "It is only the rhythm of life on the Continental Shelf as described by Rachel Carson," the man said. Then he slept again.

As the tide ebbed still further down the bloodstained beach a blade of marram grass tickled the convolutions of his infinitely delicate ear.

Towards the middle of the afternoon dark clouds covered the sun. An icy wind blew from Greenland, the seas froze, and snow lay deep over all the intertidal and supratidal zones. Sensing the change, the creatures of the dunes gathered their belongings and got the hell out of it, stirred by a sudden yearning for a nice hot cup of tea.

When the moon rose only the sand fleas were left to scrape and burrow about among the mounds of orange peel, cigarette packets and ice-cream cartons that strewed the ancient hillocks. The sound of the sea was closer now, for the tide in its tireless way had turned again and begun once more to move up the beach.

Eons later it would be closer still. Perhaps in thirty thousand years the waters of the oceans, swollen by the melting ice-cap, would sweep in a cataclysmic inundation over the sand dunes and cleanse away the accumulated litter of centuries. Perhaps, long before that date, the borough council's rubbish cart would have been along. Almost anything can happen in the endless ebb and flow of geologic time.

H. F. ELLIS



Coming treat for fish-watchers—Dr. Ludwig Koch attempts to record the love-call of an octopus



Book into Film

By ALAN HACKNEY

CERTAINLY come down," said the producer on the telephone last summer. "That'd be wonderful. But I'm afraid you'll wonder what everyone's doing all day. Do you play cricket?"

"If it's informal," I said. "Will a baby be all right? We've got another one."

"Wonderful," said the producer.

We found him alone in a bare office, sitting thoughtfully on a fibreboard box of scouring powder. A threadbare shirt hung outside his jeans trousers and his bare toes shifted about in sandals. He smoked a rather splendid cigar.

"That's a nice baby," he said. "How old is she?"

We talked for some time about babies.

"We can't go in," he said. "The red light's on."

"They're shooting?"

"Yes. When they stop it'll go off and we can go on the stage and see."

A man came in.

"Stephen, my dear fellow," said the producer, "did you find out the Test score?"

The man told him.

"I can't bear it," said the producer.

"I wonder if we could see some of the film being shot?" we asked.

"Oh, by all means, but we have to get in before the red light. I'm always getting caught."

"But how can they shoot it without you?"

"Very well indeed, my dear fellow. It's the director you're thinking of. Ah, the light's off."

We went into a large shed and walked over cables.

A scruffy group of soldiers in denims sat on a pile of rolled carpets, reading folded-up newspapers. Their cap badges and buttons were unsoldierly dull.

"Those are the extras?" we supposed.

"No, they're the artists," said the producer. "There's Dickie Attenborough, and Ian Carmichael, and Victor over there. We're very lucky. They're all very keen on cricket."

A number of very smartly dressed gentlemen were moving about with equipment.

"These technicians," we said, "are they moving the stuff for the next

scene?" We were hopeful of seeing some shooting.

The producer looked at his watch.

"No," he said, "actually they're going on strike."

The smartly attired men had put down their pieces of equipment and were disappearing through various apertures in the set.

"Where do they go?" we asked.

"None knows whither," said the producer. "They're the lighting people. They strike for an hour every morning. The other people strike from three to four every afternoon. Come and meet my twin. John!"

"My dear fellow," said his brother who was directing, "I'm so glad you came. What do you say to a cup of tea? That's a very fine baby."

"How terrible that they keep striking," we said.

"Let's have this tea," the director said. "It'll put days on the shooting, but it enables us to play cricket in the afternoons. How are they doing at Leeds, Roy?"

The producer told him the latest Test score.

"I can't stand it," said the director.

Victor Maddern came over and looked at the baby in her portable cot.

"Very nice," he said with an expression of intense grimness which proved habitual. "My daughter's mixing with a gynaecologist's daughter at the moment. Keeps on about wanting to be a gynaecologist. Five."

We began feeling uneasy at having worn our best clothes. It seemed to class us with the strikers, who, in time, began to people the place again. They all seemed very cheerful after their strike.

"Now they're going to do the scene where Stanley comes into the hut and meets Cox for the first time," said the producer.

"Oh good," we said.

"Then lunch," said the producer.

Eventually the bustle died down to a complete silence. This was pierced by a great bellow of "Quiet everyone please!" and the silence became completer.





At this point a maniacal cackle arose from the cot, greeted by frozen smiles from the assembly. I heaved the cot out through the door and put it on the grass, where the baby was at once surrounded by a group of women crying "Ah" and "Oo, baba."

The red light now showed outside the door of the stage, and I stood outside reading a notice which said "Mr. Attenborough has lost his wedding ring" among a group of technicians who seemed to be dressed for an elegant session on the Norfolk Broads. They were discussing pay with a representative of the employers.

"Tell 'im on next week's contracts we want four guineas a day usual again and pro rata," one of them was saying.

"Yes, well, I've told you how it is," said the employers' representative.

"I mean, there you are," said a very large technician. "Tell 'im if we don't get the pro ra'a we can always nip over Denham and get took on for the Bader Story."

"That's right," said a very small technician.

The red light went off, the technicians went in, and the assistant director came out.

"Ah," he said, "Mr. John and Mr. Roy say will you join them for cricket this afternoon, and your wife's already gone over for lunch. Best to have lunch now because the restaurant staff go on strike at two."

There was no sign of the producer and director during lunch, but Mr. Attenborough appeared in a singlet, denim trousers and white army braces, and ate with us until the restaurant became noticeably deserted as the staff went off for their strike. I wondered how the director and producer would manage now.

"They always bring sandwiches," said the assistant director, "don't they, Dickie? Funny."

"They never eat properly till they get home," said Mr. Attenborough. "Now I could never do that."

"Oh, the baby," said my wife.

We carried her off for feeding and were caught again by the red light, this time until the afternoon strike. A

number of the persons of greater consequence had by now mysteriously changed into better clothing, but began taking it off for the daily game of cricket.

"Wouldn't you like to come and see some of the shooting?" asked the director when stumps were drawn. "We've done terribly well so far-to-day."

Victor Maddern came up to me and said "It's dead easy. I do a fortnight-three weeks, then I go off 'ome for a week. Get sent back, go on C.O.'s orders, get seven days in the cells. Come out—no, wait a minute."

I recognized this, for I had written it.

"Come out, do a fortnight's more training," I said. Mr. Maddern nodded. "Off again for seven days—seven days in the nick."

We went inside.

An hour later they were beginning the scene for the seventh time.

"Tell old Stan your system, George," said Richard Attenborough for the seventh time. He was eating beans from a can.

"Well, it's dead simple," said Mr. Maddern, "I do a couple or three weeks,

training, then I go off 'ome for a week. Get seven days in the nick . . . wuh!"

"Cut," said the director. "Start again."

Mr. Attenborough looked sorrowfully at the beans and took another brave mouthful.

"Tell old Stan your system, George," he said in a slightly full voice.

I felt very penitent at having written it.

In a sweat of concentration Mr. Maddern got it right. ". . . Then it's about time I'm nearly due for me seven days' privilege leave. O.K. Come back a week late off that, get another seven pennorth, and so on. That way you never finish your training, and you get a good bit of time at 'ome too."

"Cut. Print it. Same time to-morrow boys," said the director. "Now for a drink."

"Would you like to finish these beans, John?" said Richard Attenborough, "I somehow feel any more would be wasted on me."

"Poor old Victor Maddern," I said.

"It was a swine of a speech," said the director.

"I'm terribly sorry," I said, and meant it. I was sorry for all of them, but not enough to take over the beans. The tin was handed to one of the morning strikers, who took it with what appeared to be a gay laugh.

"Your baby's been jolly good," said the director. "I think she deserves another feed."

The jaded artists now perked up surprisingly, loud in their commendations of breast-feeding.

"Perhaps I will later," said my wife, "in the car."

"Well," said the artists, dejected again, "let's get a drink."

"You must come down again," said the director as we said good-bye. "But we don't always get so much done. You probably still wonder what everyone does all day long."

"Do you realize," I said on the way



"Excuse me, may I have a light?"

home, "everyone in turn except the director said 'I'm afraid I haven't read the book yet.'"

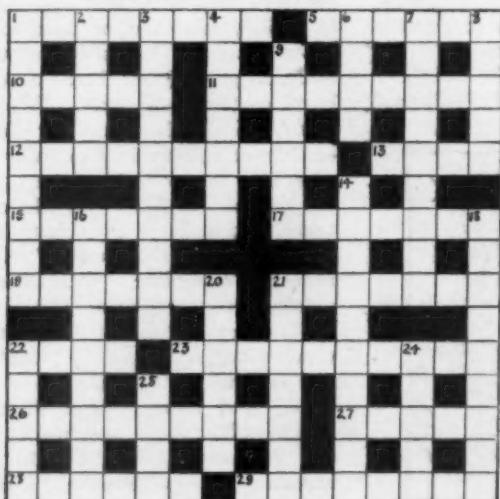
"And I didn't meet Dennis Price," said my wife.

We were both inconsolable all the way home and all last year. Since then my wife has met Dennis Price and been consoled, but none of them will ever read the book.

Summer Number Crossword

ACROSS

- That must-go-down-to-Brighton feeling. (3, 5)
5. It is now in your hands. (6, 6)
10. 5's is all too short. (5)
11. Optimistic forecast for 5. (9)
12. Whither shall we wander? In 5's in lilac time. (10)
13. His is a late 5. (4)
15. Odd, for so well-beloved a man to hit my tangled grass. (7)
17. One of the big ones the poet took for his theme, as metre irregularly dictated. (7)



Solution next week

19. A singular sandy one was mysteriously exciting. (7)
21. If skies are 11 in 5, gardens should be. (7)
22. Shakespearian since Spenser's time? This is a bit muddled! (4)
23. We're on malt, ill-brewed; no way to serve this thirst-quencher. (10)
26. Where a 7 night passed. (9)
27. Flowers commonly in late 5. (5)
28. See 5. (6)
29. Yes, eight; not one straight after the other, though, and one over that number will impair it. (8)

DOWN

1. Wastrel at sixes and sevens, all at sea. (4, 5)
2. With all the force one might expect from an ocean. (5)
3. Writhing eels lament such primitive spirits. (10)
4. How day and night divide in the seasons before and after summer. (7)
6. The coupon has been cut. (4)
7. Mummers I'd recast for this short season of immortal comedy. (9)
8. High time is had by all here. (5)
9. Spectacles for all who can see. (6)
14. Mr. Bee's step lurches—drunk on honey perhaps?—at these times. (10)
16. Trim dames get a rough ride if they change here. (9)
18. "5 —, blueness abundant," according to Browning. (9)
20. He lives on 1 down and maybe has 1 across. (6)
21. Six times out of seven you don't get the sun to start with, summer and winter alike. (7)
22. Mountains in labour bring forth—a chair. (5)
24. Prone to perjury. (5)
25. Not "the sanctimonious pirate that went to sea with the Ten Commandments but scraped one out of the table." (4)



B and K. have come and gone and, if everything is so much better as a result of this free and frank exchange, it is a bit odd that the first thing that should happen is that Mr. Selwyn Lloyd should have to go off to Paris to think up a new N.A.T.O. policy to counteract the new Soviet policy of aggression, that Mr. Maudling should have to make a speech to explain that we shall have to meet more intensive Russian competition in the future and that then the Disarmament Sub-Commission should pack up and go home. Mr. Lloyd was in bed, so he was not there to be roasted, but Mr. Nutting had to stand up to fire about disarmament. "We cannot claim to have made as much progress in the recent meetings of the sub-committee as we had hoped," said Mr. Nutting. The Soviet's "new proposals unfortunately marked a retreat in certain significant respects from their position of last year."

In fact, as Mr. Turton said of smoking, "the extent of the problem should be neither minimized nor

exaggerated." So now we clearly know where the Government stands on both these important matters of domestic and foreign policy. As the drunken Boer said at the funeral, "What could be fairer or more reasonable than that?"

On Tuesday there was a real social set-to at the Prime Minister. Would he invite the President of the United States? Would he invite the Chinese President? Would he invite the King of Ruritania and the Duke of Plaza-Toro? When was he going to return his visit to Bulge and Krush? It is an oddity that, while it never seems to occur to anybody that the two Front Benches, separated by a few feet, cannot communicate with one another except through the usual channels, no one ever seems to consider that such channels should be used for international communication. Mr. Steele had the last word when he asked whether it would not be easier if the Prime Minister sent round a general card that he was always at home at 4 p.m. on Tuesday afternoons.

Mr. Turton did not do badly as a lecturer, but his review of the Guillebaud

report was in general an effort somewhat similar to that of the magistrate in Albert and the Lion. Nothing much could be done but "no one was really to blame." Mr. Iain Macleod, his predecessor, who was rumoured to have expected that the Guillebaud Committee would uncover much greater extravagances than it did, lurked throughout the earlier part of Mr. Turton's speech unnoticed behind the Speaker's chair, rather like Cæsar's ghost at Philippi, wondering whether he would come on to the stage and do his stuff or not, then slipped inconspicuously into a place at the far end of the Government front bench.

All this was not good enough for Dr. Summerskill, who in a speech which she claimed to be uncontroversial contrived to disagree with almost everything. The truth of the matter is that, whatever the rights or wrongs of abstract theory, one cannot make much of a party issue out of these social services, because it is plain that they could not go on unless there was some broad continuity of policy. Whether it was originally planted right or wrong, one cannot pull up the tree every five minutes to see how it is growing. Yet Dr. Summerskill had, it must be confessed, a goodish try. She objected that there were no "real consumers" on the maternity committee. Mr. Turton mildly intervened to point out that the two ladies on that committee had fifteen children between them. If "real" be the word and if "consumer" be the word, what is real consumption if fifteen children be not real? But Dr. Summerskill was "bitterly disappointed" that, when she had made a serious suggestion, the Minister should



have turned her off with "a smart retort." It reminds one of the famous argument between Clutton Brock and Hilaire Belloc about the authorship of the Gospels. "But who do you think did write the four gospels?" asked Clutton Brock. "I think," said Belloc, "that they were written by four gentlemen called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John." "Why will you always try to be clever?" said Clutton Brock and stamped out of the room in a fury.

Socialists boil with indignation but they prefer to boil in absentia. When Mr. Blenkinsop wound up for them there were eleven of them to support him on the back benches, and the next day even the sacred cause of the Co-op was not sufficient to bring a large number of them into the Chamber. There are times when one wonders if it would not be better if Parliament closed down—like other branch lines.

Earlier Mr. Boyd-Carpenter had told the old-age pensioners how their earnings could be raised. They could, if they liked, now "de-retire" and go back to earning. (To do Mr. Boyd-Carpenter justice, he knew that he was making a joke in coining that unlovely word.) But they could only "de-retire" with their wives' consent. Widows were under no such disability. They could de-retire and re-de-retire at their own



The Speaker



Pied Piper Nabarro

sweet will—whether qua widows or qua workers.

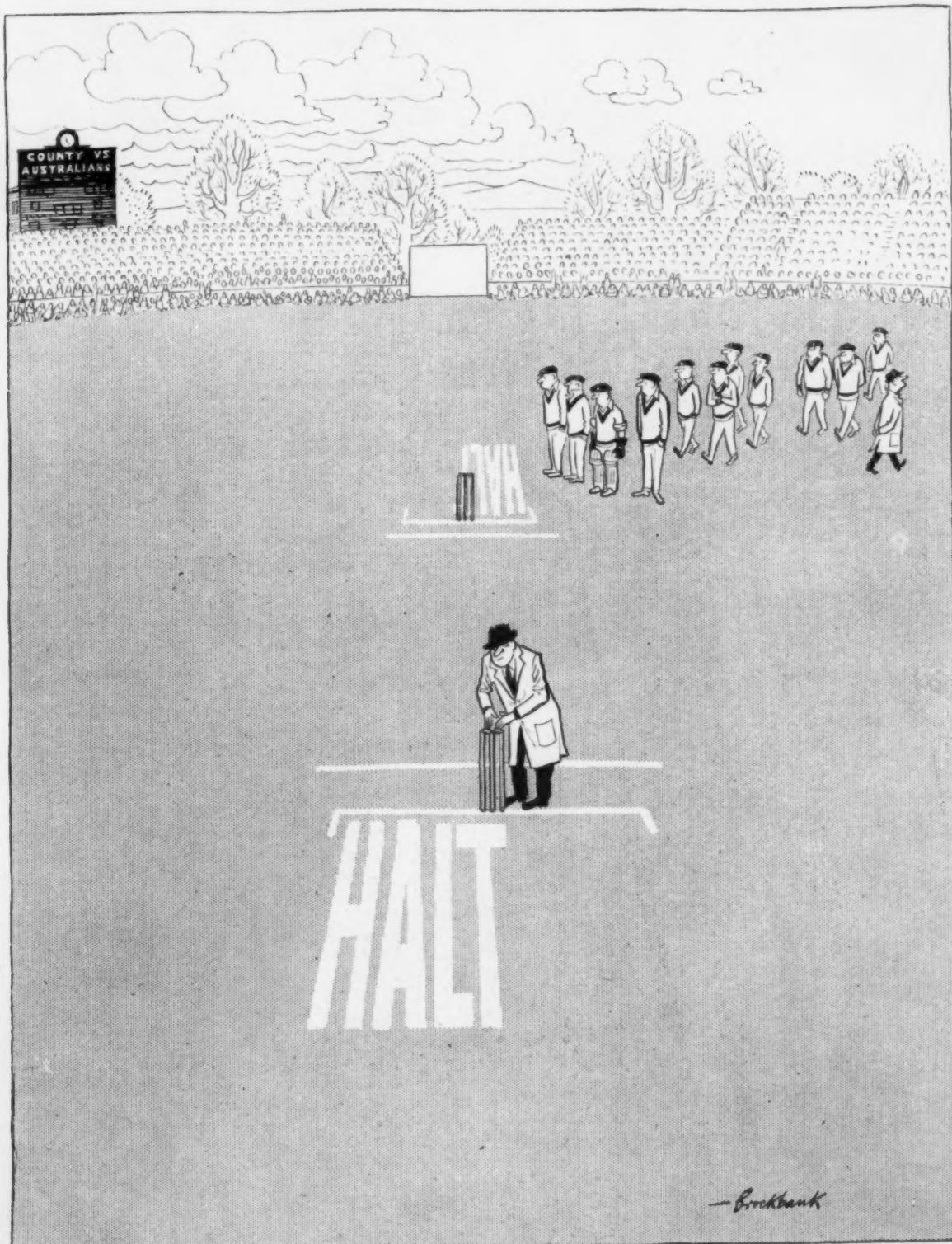
Tuesday was Automation Day. Unlike Coolidge on sin, Mr. Macleod was for it. "Automation: Government Acts," read the headlines in the evening papers. It was not very easy to see in what way the Government was acting except by encouraging other people to talk. But what else could they do? But what—more important—is it that we want? Do we want full employment? Do we want a higher standard of living? Do we want happiness? or holiness? or just whimsy-whamsy and the Kennet, Avon and Betjeman Canal? Parliament, if it exists for any purpose, exists to thrash out these fundamental issues. But that seems to be the one thing that it never does—or at least only very rarely on a private Member's day when the whips are off.

It is this fundamental indifference to discussion which gave a point to Lord Selborne's protest in the Lords against the amount of money that we are spending on education. Are we getting value for it? asked Lord Selborne. I think that we are getting more than he allowed for. Unfashionable as it may be to confess as much, manners as a result of education are better and the ladder has enabled many young men and women to lead more useful lives than they would otherwise have led. But at the same time the absence of any clear thinking about the purpose of things is frightening. A Fijian chief who visited the United States was

terrified to find that the boys and girls of that benighted country were, as he interpreted it, incarcerated in institutions called schools from the age of six to the age of sixteen. "Why," he said, "that's just the time in life when they ought to be learning something."

Wednesday was frogman day. Mr. John Dugdale had put down the question about the fate of Commander Crabb to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, but as had been expected the Prime Minister took it himself. He was giving nothing away in spite of Mr. Gaitskell's support of Mr. Dugdale. What had been done had been done without authority. Disciplinary steps would be taken and he was not prepared to say anything more. And that was that. It was not very satisfactory but at least Edgar Wallace was a change from Albert and the Lion. At least it was a change from the all too familiar rigmarole which has often pretended that nothing was wrong. The Speaker would not let Mr. Dugdale raise this on the adjournment, nor was he any kinder to Mr. Fenner Brockway who wanted to raise the death sentences in Cyprus. The Speaker said that it was not possible to raise them under the rules of the House. Mr. Kenneth Robinson and Mr. Griffith said that they had been raised in the Lords an hour ago and a Minister had answered. But the Speaker said that he had nothing to do with the Lords. Lords do as Lords may do.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS





Record Roundabout

ONE of the most surprising industrial developments in this TV age is the renaissance of the gramophone business. Decca pay spectacular dividends, E.M.I. make a handsome recovery, popular demand for the record-players of Pye (the "Black Box" is a favourite), Grundig and others booms in spite of H.P. and P.T. restrictions, the newspapers introduce record review columns and crooners of "pops" become disc-stars overnight. Why?

Have we suddenly become a musical nation? Are the people in revolt against the TV channels and their iron rations of melody and rhythm? Are they dissatisfied with sound radio's preoccupation with light and palm court music? Has the teaching of musical appreciation (instead of tonic sol-fa) in the schools produced a nation of domestic concertgoers? Has possession of long-play records replaced the pre-war social convention of the parlour piano and music lessons at five shillings a time? Or are the fantastic sales figures (60 million discs last year) only another manifestation of inflation, rocketing wages and the redistribution of the national income?

It is much simpler of course to explain the record record as the public's enthusiastic welcome for a new product. Long-play records and electric high-fidelity gramophones fitted with permanent sapphire needles have given us a wonderful new toy. This new equipment really does mean music without tears, frustration and labour, and it is not difficult to understand why music-lovers, most of them from the penurious middle-classes, should skimp and save to buy their beloved symphonies and operas at forty shillings a record. (They are much cheaper in the United States.) But the records being sold are of all types, speeds and sizes. Hit Parade stuff, as featured and plugged by Radio Luxembourg, "Housewives' Choice,"

"Off the Record" and other disc-jockey shows, sells on old-fashioned short-play records by the million; and jazz and jive and bop, largely neglected by the B.B.C., now have thousands of acquisitive devotees. Classical, jazz, light or popular, the music spins to delighted audiences—and to the satisfaction of investors in Decca and E.M.I.

These two companies, Decca and E.M.I. *alias* Electrical and Musical Industries, *alias* "His Master's Voice," dominate the gramophone record market with something like 85 per cent of total sales, and the struggle for leadership, hit tunes, name bands, star conductors and instrumentalists is extraordinarily brisk.

Decca are now in league with R.C.A. (the Radio Corporation of America), and next year will be able to manufacture and market all new R.C.A. recordings in this country. This contract will break E.M.I.'s link with R.C.A.'s "Victor" subsidiary. And as a quid pro quo

E.M.I. have recently bought up Capitol Records of California and taken over the distribution of Capitol discs (from Decca) in the U.K. The signs are that Decca just has its nose in front. It was first in the field (1950) with long-play records and so won a two-year lead over its rival, and its record of progress in trading, net and Ordinary paid profit is most impressive. Since 1950 trading profits have grown from £350,000 to £1,730,000, net profits from £42,000 to more than half a million, and the "percentage paid" on greatly increased capital has climbed accordingly.

The affairs of E.M.I. and Decca are not, of course, in one bottom trusted: both are heavily involved in a wide range of electronic and electrical activities. But the record business is responsible for a large slice of their bread-and-butter, and while the boom (or craze?) lasts the Ordinary shares of the two giants must be considered very attractive investments. MAMMON

* * *

to Newcastle for coal. Let me tell you, Devonshire cream can be made just as well in Sheffield as in Bideford. All you need is the milk: all we have is the name. Of course our method of making cream is infinitely superior to any other; proof of that lies on the palate. Devonshire cream is the raspberry's perfection and the strawberry's purpose. But I myself made it quite effectively in India with the milk of an ox.

First take a gallon of fresh milk and place it in a large enamel bowl. Do nothing to it; let it stand in a cool place for at least twelve hours, preferably over night. Then in the morning, when the cream has risen to the top, carry the bowl carefully and place it on the stove, letting it *scald* gently for another twelve hours. The secret is in the scalding. It means a slow fire, a low gas; the cream must warm but never boil. Take it off the stove when you see the shape of the bottom of the pan in outline on the surface of the cream. I don't know why that occurs, but it does and it is the sign every farmer's wife looks for to know her cream is scalded and ready for skimming. Skim with a fish slice and put the cream back in the larder. Leave it for another twelve hours if you can. Time is important: it gives the bugs time to breed, and they give it its unique flavour. For that reason, cleanliness is to be avoided. Hygiene never did any good to an epicure. And may those who put their cream into a refrigerator be condemned to a diet of processed cheese.

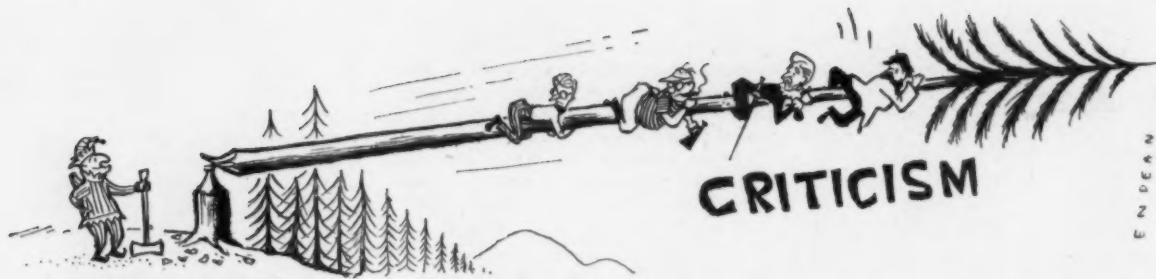
RONALD DUNCAN



The Secret of Cream

AT the grave risk of causing some offence, and possibly being sent to Coventry by some of my avaricious neighbours as a result, I intend to disclose their secret. They have enjoyed their monopoly too long. And since I do not participate in the profits, I do not see why I should be discreet. Besides, their trade causes me some considerable inconvenience. It has become impossible for me to thread the narrow lanes around my farm with a tractor because of the pack of pilgrims in their beetle-like cars, all in pursuit of Devonshire cream. Even the village square is blocked, and I cannot park within half a mile of the post office because the invaders are all there, busily posting off their pots and tins of this delectable confection to every part of the country.

It is absurd. It is as if the whole of England went to Lowestoft for herrings,



BOOKING OFFICE

Their Village

The Sociology of an English Village: Gosforth. W. M. Williams. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 25/-

ONE of the most irritating affectations of a generation ago was to sneer at exactitude of knowledge. Apart from the pedantic schoolmasters, who anyway narrowed "accuracy" to case and quantity, people regarded getting things right as slightly vulgar. Somebody should investigate the causes and effects of the British cult of ignorance. Have the French or Italians ever thought that inability to understand scientific terminologies was charming? Seizing on a few enthusiasts who tried to fit out incommensurables with measurements and gave up to statistics what was meant for descriptive prose, the stupid claimed them as evidence that any attempt to clarify the hazy was unromantic and bounderish and the kind of thing that led to the extension of University education to provincials and Indians. Man, however, lives by a curiosity that demands ever more precise answers. Vagueness has no more value aesthetically than spiritually. Poets are great readers of science.

This new volume in the *International Library of Sociology and Reconstruction* tells us far more about the people of a West Cumberland village than the open-air essayists told us about villages forty years ago. There are charts and tables and references to books on half a dozen scientific subjects, and I suppose the obscurantists would think that techniques for studying people were even worse than techniques for studying elements or forces. It is true that this seems to a layman a particularly good example of sociology. Mr. Williams writes well, keeps a quietly amused detachment and realizes the limits of his material and techniques. I found the subject-matter fascinating and the book exhilarating and my enjoyment seems to me to show a widening of the resources of hedonism during the

century. Specialists may find mistakes. The common reader will find what his remoter and more sensible ancestors would have called *The Pleasures of Knowledge*.

This is an agricultural area on the edge of a new industrial area. There are outlying family farms, patriarchal and mentally isolated, and a village that has only recently begun to change. (The field-work was done between 1950 and 1953.) The inhabitants are detached from the nation, the county and even



the rural district. The strongest tie is kinship, and some of the kinship patterns, like some of the feasts that still mark the farming seasons, probably originated in Scandinavian settlements in the tenth century. There is a good deal of neighbourly mutual aid. Gift and remuneration, work and leisure, are interwoven, though the influence of industrialization, with its atomization of society and activity and payment, is influencing the young. As well as the broad survey of methods of farming and family patterns and local associations, there is plenty of historical and contemporary detail. Gosforth people's comments on their neighbours appear in their own words along with the careful statistics. We wander about

with Mr. Williams on the fell farms and up and down the long village street and in at back doors. Then there comes something quite different, a quotation from a mediaeval or Tudor document or a comparison of some Gosforth custom with one from Africa or the East.

Part of the book's interest is methodological. Mr. Williams is trying out a way of investigating class and comparing it with other methods. Taking class to be a matter of description, he questioned the inhabitants or let them talk about their assessment of the relative social position of other inhabitants and of themselves and then collated and cross-checked the answers. He found seven well-defined classes—a salutary reminder of the inadequacy of the usual tripartite division. This technique was more successful than Professor Warner's Sampling and Index of Status Characteristics, which he also tried. (It is fair to point out that Professor Warner is studying mainly social dynamics, Mr. Williams, inevitably, social statics. In the community that Mr. Williams was studying, movement from one class to another in either direction was non-approved.)

Mr. Williams tries not to judge, though he criticizes the gulf between Anglicanism and the actual ethics and beliefs of the villagers. He tends to speak of change as deterioration, probably because sociologists acquire the same kind of affectionate loyalty to the societies they study as biographers do towards their subjects. He compares Gosforth interestingly with Wales; but it seems to be Wales with all the pettiness left in and all the poetry taken out. This narrow, self-righteous, ignorant, back-biting community lacks most of the qualities that normally win communities praise. Without art, learning, gaiety or vision, Gosforth is far from the smiling villages that are usually compared with the worst industrial areas by lovers of the past. Gosforth lacks the virtues of the old England and the virtues of the new. Its concentration on money, its subordination of women and children to

accumulation, its curiously complex snobbery make it seem, at least to anyone who knows it only from this book, a perfectly horrible village; but how one's comprehension of the world is extended by reading this many-sided study of it.

R. G. G. PRICE

Birdman of Alcatraz. Thomas E. Gaddis. *Gollancz*, 16/-

This is the story of an American prisoner, Robert Stroud, sent down for twelve years in 1909 for murder, sentenced to death for killing a warder in 1916 and reprieved by President Wilson. While in solitary confinement he took a couple of fledgling sparrows into his cell, reared them, graduated to canaries, and by 1927 had one hundred and twenty-five cage-birds sharing his solitude and was supporting his mother by the sale of surplus stock and by writing articles for avian journals. In his spare time he carried on a busy correspondence with less constricted bird-fanciers, published a classic *Digest of Bird Diseases*, married a widow and waged incessant warfare with the authorities for what he deemed to be his rights.

All this, and much more, is told in the machine-made, go-easy-on-the-subordinate-clauses American style—which suits it, for it is more bizarre than Raymond Chandler. And over it all looms the immense, unanswered question: Why is Stroud, who has done no violence since 1916, still in prison, still in solitary confinement—and for the last thirteen years cut off from his birds and immured in the last-ditch island-gaol of Alcatraz?

H. F. E.

The Long Walk. Slavomir Rawicz. *Constable*, 15/-

This is the escape story of a Polish officer arrested as spy by the Russians in 1939 and deported after horrifying torture and mock trial to north-eastern Siberia. With half a dozen companions he broke out of his prison camp, walked south through blizzards to Lake Baikal and on to the waterless Gobi desert, walked across the desert to Tibet, walked across Tibet to the Himalayas, and, finally over the mountains, walked down to safety in India, four of the party surviving after four thousand miles.

Such a journey might stand for one of the great adventures of history. Equipment included a knife and an axe, but neither fire-arms nor any water container, and although for three luxurious weeks they lived on snakes, for most of the time, we learn, they neither ate nor drank. Credence totters when a beautiful girl refugee joins their company, and fails entirely at their encounter with two abominable snow-men. The later pages have even a savour of Rider Haggard.

C. C. P.

Where the Turk Trod. Anthony Rhodes. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 18/-

"And what should I do in Illyria?" asked the lady in the play. After reading

Mr. Rhodes' book she might well go there for a holiday. The people seem favourably disposed towards the English, the prospects suitably Byronic, and the towers and minarets of the gorgeous East as near Victoria Station as they are ever likely to be. The book is an account of journey through Bosnia and Herzegovina—blessed names in our pre-World War One stamp-albums, before hybrids like Yugoslavia were born.

Mr. Rhodes set out to reach Sarajevo, taking with him a Slavonic Mussulman, who supplied the horses, and his brother, who supplied the excellent photographs. The object was to observe how much of Islam survives in these once Turkish lands, and the surprise is how little of Christendom was ever there. Mr. Rhodes is a good gossip, as befits a traveller, and he chatters entertainingly. For instance he says it is to the Bogomils, a Christian sect persecuted by the Turks, that we owe an English six-letter word. We had suspected the Bulgarians. It is not, happily, of Anglo-Saxon origin.

R. G.

Tiberius: A Study in Resentment. Gregorio Marañon. *Hollis and Carter*, 25/-

In his foreword Professor Syme says that the testimony of Dr. Marañon must be heard with respect, so laymen can only grumpily acquiesce when this distinguished Spanish psychologist and historian strips Tiberius of his Capri orgies. Instead of a prodigy of licence we have a cold, embittered, puritanical administrator, who in old age became savage and suspicious but never warmed into the satyr of the legend. Dr. Marañon begins by discussing the nature of resentment and then argues that Tiberius was a typical case of it.

The arrangement of the book by topics involves some chronological blurring; but it is intended for readers who are familiar with the story, though it is not very technical and anyone at all interested in character or in the past should enjoy it. There is plenty of odd detail: all the Claudians had hair growing low on their necks, and Mark Antony's daughter adored her pet eel with earrings. The translation enables readers ignorant of Spanish to glimpse the language of the original.

R. G. G. P.

The Englishman's Flora. Geoffrey Grigson. *Phoenix*, £4 15s.

Although orthodox botanists may find his approach too literary and speculative, Mr. Grigson should surely be applauded for his devotion to the herbs and trees of England. His index of local names ranges from Aar (alder) to Zenry (charlock), and each species, besides its usual classification, has a note of its medical or magical properties. He emphasizes that a Herbal was above all a handbook for practical purposes and that the gardens, woods, and fields were the source from which the medicine-chests of our ancestors were stocked. The earliest



gardens were herb gardens, and it was only gradually that plants were cultivated for their beauty so that Fritillaries could be mentioned by Gerard in his *Herbal* of 1597 as being "greatly esteemed for beautifying of our gardens and the bosom of the beautifull."

A peculiarity of Irish herb-doctors was to mix yellow sulphur with the yellow back of *Berberis vulgaris* and administer the potion in stout for cases of jaundice. More recently the country habit of drinking an infusion of willow bark for ague was investigated, with the result that the basis of aspirin was isolated. In fact when Dido stood with a willow in her hand she was probably preparing to take the equivalent of two aspirins to soothe her nerves.

V. G. P.

The Vengeance of Private Pooley. Cyril Jolly. *Heinemann*, 15/-

Much of the general outline of this book is already public knowledge, for the trial of Lt.-Col. Fritz Knoechlein excited a good deal of interest in October 1948.

Mr. Jolly has now produced the full story of this black episode in the annals of war. The barbarity of the massacre was such that British Intelligence officers would not take any action on the report, which they presumably considered to be exaggerated, by Privates Pooley and O'Callaghan. These two soldiers miraculously escaped when, with nearly 100 of their comrades, they were marched into an open field and deliberately mown down by machine-gun fire; Private Pooley eventually returned to the scene of the crime after demobilization to convince himself that it did really happen.

A. V.

William, or More Loved than Loving. Lord Sudley. *Chapman and Hall*, 7/6

When this odd little book was published in 1933 it pleased critics as perceptive as Sir Desmond MacCarthy. During the intervening years, deadly to so much light

writing, it has kept its flavour, and, as Mr. Evelyn Waugh points out in a preface to the new edition, has gained interest in its intimate reflections of the final period of comfortable aristocracy. For William, who unbars his soul frankly in these private confessions, was born with a golden spoon in his mouth and was determined to make what use of it he wished.

"I like," he admits, "to be the sly one among simpletons." He declines to be moulded by the common virtues, and at the age of twenty-four has become a master of stratagem in self-defence against a vulgar and hustling world. In its open cynicism his slyness is strangely disarming, and as he enlarges on his shamelessness we are won to him more and more.

E. O. D. K.



AT THE PLAY

Look Back in Anger
(ROYAL COURT)

JOHN OSBORNE, the author of *Look Back in Anger*, makes it clear from the start that he intends to kick us in the teeth, and go on kicking us. "Squeamish, are you?" we can hear him saying, "you just wait!" So he draws liberally on the vocabulary of the intestines and laces his tirades with the steamer epithets of the tripe butcher. His hero, who for most of the evening is roaring his contempt for the middle and upper classes and indeed for any orderly plan of living, is a very tiresome young man, an exhibitionist wallowing in self-pity. He bullies and humiliates his wife,

whose prim parents have not unnaturally opposed the marriage, and when his social rage is temporarily exhausted he weeps at the infinite sadness of his life. If you ask why he behaves like a spoilt baby, the answer is hard to find, except that this is Freud's centenary and I suspect Mr. OSBORNE of an over-dose of Tennessee Williams; all that can be claimed in the man's defence is an unhappy childhood, but otherwise, in spite of having a degree behind him, he has chosen to quarrel with everyone, run a sweet-stall and live in an animal way in an abysmally sordid one-room flat.

The very odd thing is that Mr. OSBORNE seems to expect us to sympathize with this creature, as if he were a reasonable representative of a betrayed and bewildered generation. Anyone less deserving of sympathy I cannot imagine; self-pity hardens the most charitable heart. One is sorry for his wretched little wife, pulverized by his verbal artillery (one began to feel bruised oneself), and delighted when she leaves him; but I could have smacked her for her final grovelling return, in hysterical renunciation of all the creeds black-listed by bed-sitter nihilism. Is this supposed to be a splendid gesture on behalf of the self-oppressed? In any case it is no end to the play, for the whole silly cycle of torture and collapse will clearly begin again.

This is a first play, and if I have been hard on it it is because Mr. OSBORNE has not done justice to his own powers. He has a good turn of wit and phrase, and an ability, when he is not over-writing, to

express himself with force. There are moments here, swamped by bitterness and hysteria, that might have been moving; and though the dialogue holds up the action by trying to be too clever, it is not without quality. Having got this gall out of his system he should write a more interesting play.

The heavy burden of almost constantly addressing a public meeting is carried by KENNETH HAIGH, slightly monotonously but with spirit. Pale and crushed, MARY URE dumbly conveys the nervous strain of living with a masochist, and there is a good performance by ALAN BATES as the simpleton friend who stands by faithfully. HELENA HUGHES plays the upright visitor who loathes her host and then, when his wife leaves him, suddenly becomes his mistress. One moment she is smacking his face in fury, the next, to our great astonishment, they are locked together. I felt she would never have stayed five minutes in such a zoo, but Miss HUGHES went some way to persuading me.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)
Hotel Paradiso (Winter Garden—9/5/56), ALEC GUINNESS leads a French romp. *The Power and the Glory* (Phoenix—18/4/56), fascinating as a production. *A Likely Tale* (Globe—11/4/56), slight but amusing, with MARGARET RUTHERFORD and ROBERT MORLEY.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE BALLET

Birthday Offering
(COVENT GARDEN)
Les Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit (PALACE)

ON May 5, 1931, a full night of ballet filled the bill at the Old Vic. It was the first ever to be given by the infant Vic-Wells Ballet, the creation of a remarkable young Irishwoman who, as a dancer in the Diaghilev Company, had adopted the *nom du théâtre* of Ninette de Valois. She had convinced that hard-bargainer, Lilian Baylis, that there was a future for English ballet. From that beginning she had set her sights confidently on establishing ballet as a national institution.

Twenty-five years later, to the day, an evening charged with emotion and illuminated by dazzling beauty of form and colour, movement and mime, signalized the anniversary. At the end, after many curtain calls for artists, Dame Ninette, before an echelon of dancers and collaborators (some in stage costume, others in the guise of street attire), stood unmistakably a queen of queens, the star of intensest brilliance among her satellites.

ROBERT HELPMANN had returned after years of absence to reappear in the part he performed twenty years before in de Valois's Hogarthian ballet *The Rake's Progress*. Either we had forgotten the sinister power of his portrayal of a young man's degradation of mind and body or



Alison Porter—MARY URE

Jimmy Porter—KENNETH HAIGH

else he was bringing to the ballet much that he has since acquired as an actor. It was a memorable impersonation. Later, in ASHTON's *Façade*, to WALTON's music, he was to show the comic spirit which he has more often displayed in ballet.

The *pièce de résistance* was ASHTON's *Birthday Offering*, wherein the company's top seven couples appeared in a *divertissement* of sparkling brilliance. Without, I surmise, much inspiration from the music by GLAZOUNOV, ASHTON surpassed himself—and, incidentally, Balanchine in his own genre—in a regally romantic presentation of English ballet's aristocracy.

On a stage adorned with black curtains and candelabra only, each of the seven ballerinas danced *hier pas seul*. GREY, ELVIN, NERINA, BERIOSOVA, JACKSON, FIFIELD and finally FONTEYN, fulfilled every exacting expectation, since ASHTON, with uncanny skill and understanding, had provided each with a variation wonderfully suited to her characteristic excellencies as a dancer and her personality as an artist.

Their seven cavaliers, SOMES, GRANT, SHAW, CHATFIELD, BLAIR, DOYLE and ASHBRIDGE, in a brilliant *ensemble* demonstrated, as one had scarcely realized before, what a magnificent team of *danseurs nobles* the company possesses. In pairs, and with a climax provided by a *pas de deux* of unexampled virtuosity for FONTEYN and SOMES, the triumph ended. The notion of regal splendour was enhanced by the dresses identical in design but different in colour devised by the young Frenchman from the Dior stable, ANDRÉ LEVASSEUR.

PETIT and RENÉE JEANMAIRE, with a strong company, are in London for a four-week season in which the programme will remain unchanged throughout. It includes *Le Loup* (the sad little Anouilh tale of a romantic wolf who steals a young man's bride and with her pays the penalty of death) and *Carmen*. Two new works, enthusiastically received, are *La Chambre*, a *Grand Guignol* ballet by GEORGES SIMENON to music by GEORGES AURIC, and a burlesque of a French music-hall "production number" entitled *Les Balles Damnées*, by PETIT. These I shall discuss next week.

C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PICTURES

The Trouble With Harry
Land of the Pharaohs

IT is tempting to use some such phrase as "about as whimsy as they come" to sum up *The Trouble With Harry* (Director: ALFRED HITCHCOCK), but that would be misleading. To read that would put me off, for example, whereas in fact I quite enjoyed this absurd piece—although few would deny that it is about as whimsy as they come. From HITCHCOCK the master of suspense it is utterly unexpected.

Among its other surprising virtues is great visual charm. It is in Technicolor and VistaVision, and for the first time VistaVision struck me as quite outstandingly better than CinemaScope—at least for this kind of effect. A great deal of the action passes in the woods of New England in their autumn foliage, and the sharpness and depth of focus of VistaVision for some reason make the scenes extraordinarily satisfying.

The story is a piece of nonsense about a corpse—a corpse called Harry that need never be taken seriously, except by the energetically eccentric characters who exert themselves to hide it and rediscover it; it is no more than a symbol, an inconvenient object to be lying about. The bumbling old Captain (EDMUND GWENN), who wears his seafaring cap at all times and keeps a ship's figurehead by his fireplace to lean on, is under the impression that he potted Harry by mistake when out shooting rabbits, and at least two of the other personages believe that they killed him in other ways. Progressive revelations and misunderstandings cause the body to be hidden and dug up again several times, and below the main level of eccentricity there are two attractive young people to provide what is commonly called a romantic interest; and that really about sums the thing up. No emotions whatever, not even mild anxiety; if you want to "lose yourself," try elsewhere. But for detached amusement—light amusement—and visual pleasure, you could do a lot worse.

Land of the Pharaohs (Director: HOWARD HAWKS) too is hardly spine-chilling or profoundly gripping in any other way, and in this instance that does make an unfortunate difference. It is enormously spectacular, this CinemaScope "epic": it stands or falls by its spectacle, its huge crowds of extras building a thief-proof tomb—i.e., a pyramid—for the Pharaoh five thousand years ago; otherwise it tends to leave one either unmoved or a little derisive. There is, of course, no absolute reason why one should feel amusement at hearing colloquial locutions from these stately historic figures, for there must have been colloquial speech of some kind and to represent it ought to be possible; and yet when Pharaoh, returning from conquering the Kushite tribes, is greeted with "My lord, it is good to have you back" and replies "It is good to be back," the temptation is irresistible to think of him as a man who has had a hard day at the office and a long bus-ride home. (Later—I am still ignoring some of the best quotations already made by other critics—he is brought perilously close to the world of radio comedy by having to cry "Don't just stand there—")

The honoured name of WILLIAM FAULKNER is at the head of the list of three script-writers, but I can't believe he took the job very seriously. Nor can



(The Trouble With Harry)

Captain Albert Wiles—EDMUND GWENN

I believe that JACK HAWKINS was very happy in the part of Pharaoh; but he looks impressive. The whole thing looks impressive. That is the main point about it.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

One first-rate new one in London is the Spanish *Death of a Cyclist*, of which more next week. *The Swan* (9/5/56) continues, but there is nothing else I would strongly recommend except *The African Lion* (11/4/56), which is safe for everybody. Brightest all-round programme is the Curzon's—the revue *New Faces* (with EARTHA KITT) and the French *Papa, Mama, the Maid and I* (see "Survey," 11/4/56).

Of the releases, most important is *Alexander the Great* (11/4/56), which I found surprisingly entertaining. *Charley Moon* (18/4/56) is quite good fun.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

"We, the British"

AT a time when so much of our listening and viewing is imported it is rather pleasant to find a programme unashamedly entitled "We, the British." The I.T.A. sponges on the United States, the B.B.C. has an undying affection for speakers with thick and broken Central European accents, and there are times—whole evenings in fact—when "Are We in Decline?" the sub-title of Christopher Mayhew's series, seems merely a rhetorical question. Wouldn't it be cheaper in the long run to lift the weather report from America or Russia, take the Czechoslovakian news and the Italian sports results?

Christopher Mayhew, thank goodness, is as British as the Grove Family, Nancy Mitford or the Imperial Institute. He is one of the few television personalities who look and sound as though they mean every word they say. When he stares into the lens of the camera he buttonholes the viewer and insists on being understood. He so obviously means well that it is extremely difficult to quarrel with his line of argument or to doubt his facts. He is as earnest as an early Fabian, as neutral as Frank Chester, as sweetly reasonable as a welfare officer in a juvenile court. I enjoy his programmes and I think they do a lot of good.

In "We, the British" he is attempting another of his vast social surveys, a complete analysis, political, economic, social and moral, of the British way of life, and both the strength and weakness of the series are inherent in the terms of reference. Mayhew is never guilty of isolating world and national problems



We, the British

ORSON WELLES; GEORGE BURNS; LUCILLE BALL; CHRISTOPHER MAYHEW; JACK WEBB; HANS HASS

and examining them from the narrow and dangerous angle of the specialist: he is too interested in ethical and social values to allow diplomacy and the economics of hard cash to hog the limelight. But because he tries to shed light over enormous areas of controversy he often leaves the viewer in penumbral gloom. The probe into "Our Economic Life" contained something for everybody—a pictorial comparison between domestic life in York fifty years ago and to-day, facts and figures on productivity, exports, capital investment, technical education and the gold and dollar reserves, and interviews with a productivity expert and a trade commissioner. The film sequences were very well done and would, no doubt, have proved instructive to youngsters. But at 9.30 p.m. the television audience is presumably adult, and no adult really needs to be reminded that kitchens and drains have improved during the last fifty years. Then, having

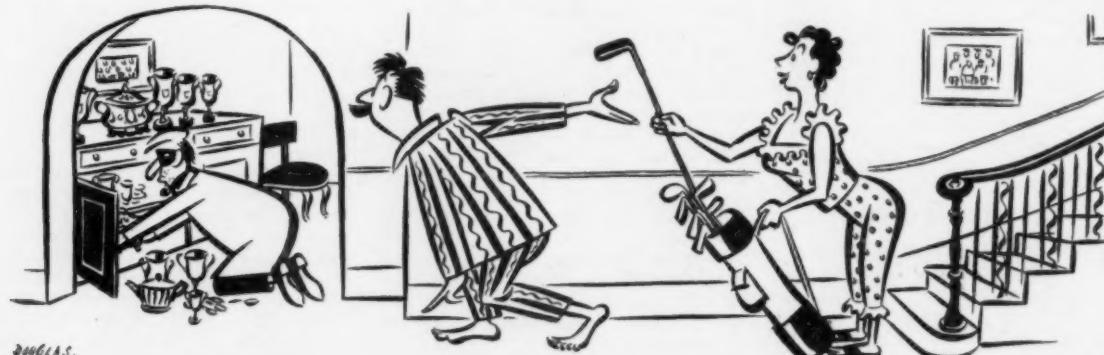
dawdled for too long at this elementary level, the lecturer galloped away through a jungle of complicated issues. In other words, the programme lacked balance. Far too much was attempted and no single aspect of an immensely important subject received adequate treatment.

I hope Mr. Mayhew will reconsider his plan of campaign. Had he set his class a revisionary exercise I am quite certain that the resultant essays would reveal the basic weaknesses of his pedagogic method.

Can the B.B.C. do nothing to improve the viewer's lot on Friday evenings? For a long time now Friday has been stuffed like a rag-bag with almost worthless odds and ends of entertainment—the

programme planners' assumption being, I suppose, that Friday night is bath-night, pub-night, no-homework-night, a night when anything goes. It is true that Jacqueline Mackenzie in "Highlight" usually manages to brighten the earlier proceedings, that Jeanne Heal occasionally provides fifteen minutes of useful magazine material, and that the late night final of "Press Conference" is sometimes worth sitting up for, but these items are interlarded by dreary wastes of futility and poppycock. "I Married Joan" (the old American routine), "Ask Pickles," "Judge for Yourself," "Hans and Lotte Hass," "Dreamtime with Barbara" and kindred programmes make reviewing one of the most tedious of trades. Why not switch over to the I.T.A. for "Sixpenny Corner," "Drag-net," "Take Your Pick" and "The Adventures of Robin Hood"? Why, indeed!

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



SUGAR S.

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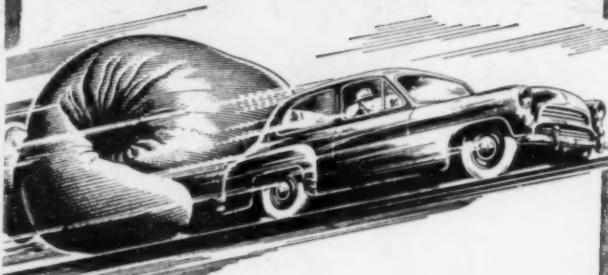
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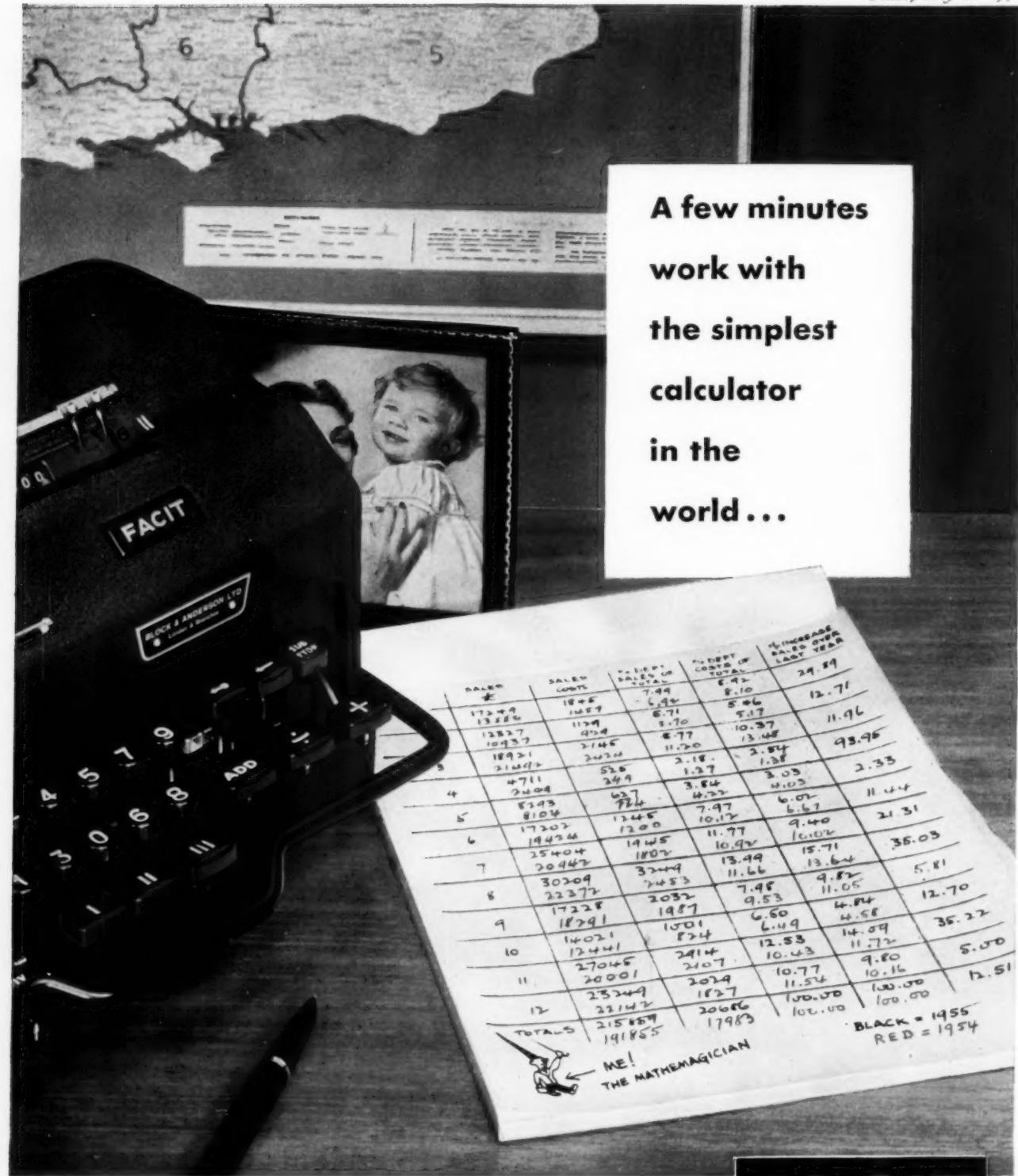
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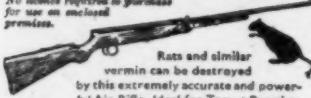
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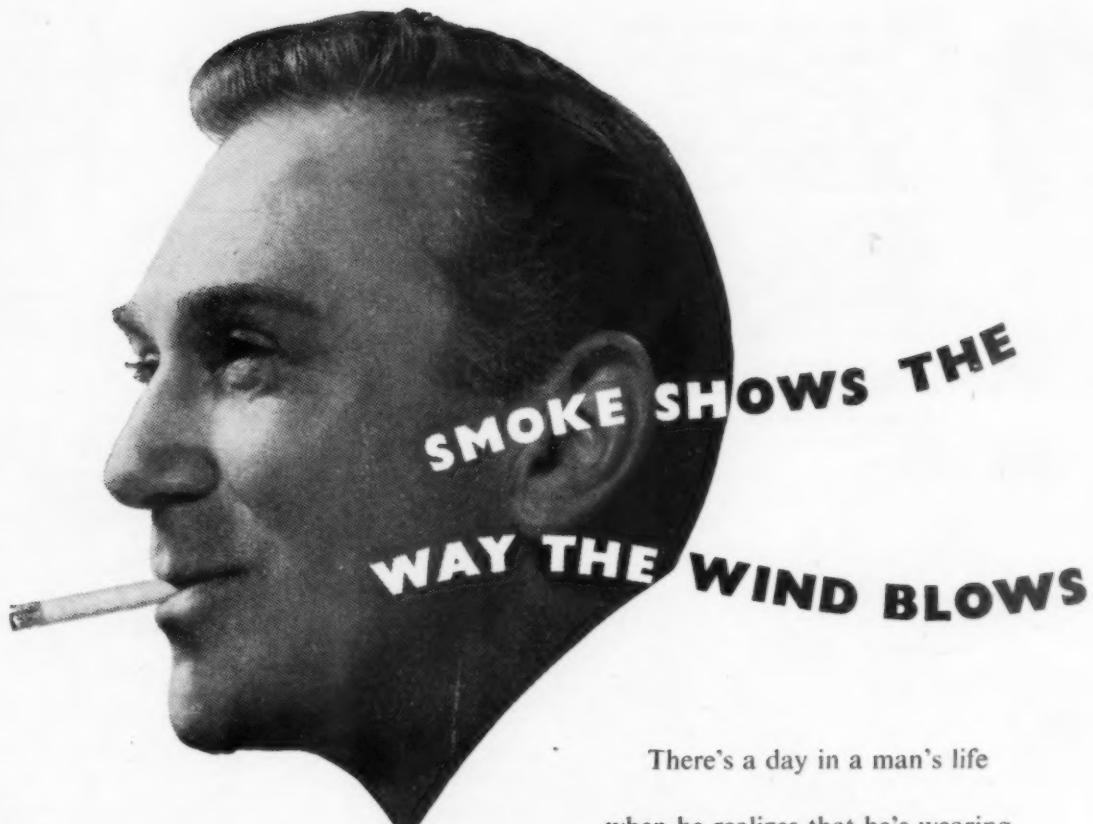
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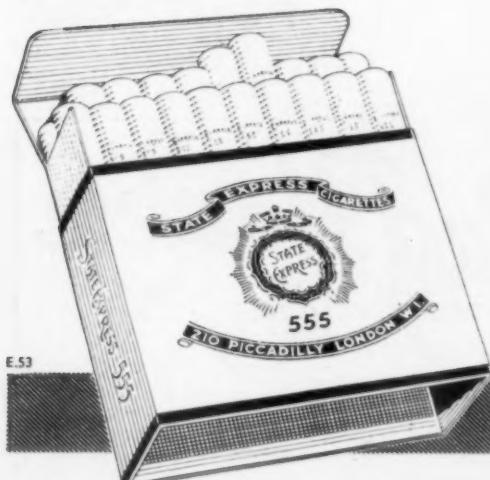
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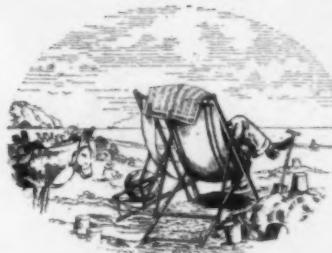


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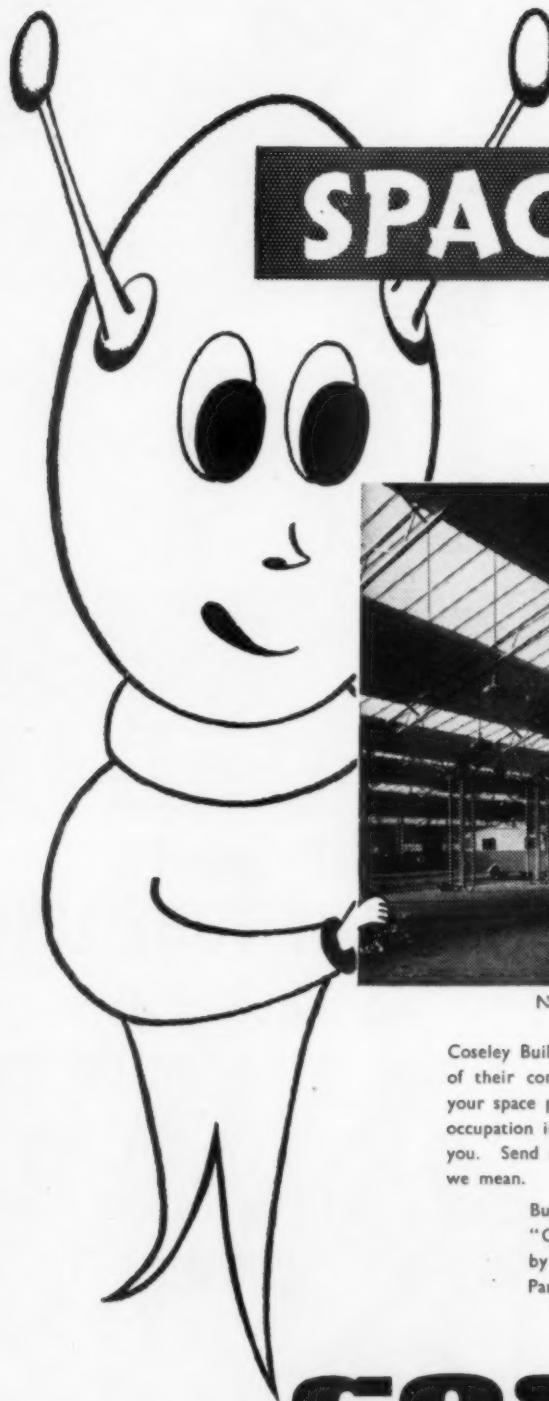


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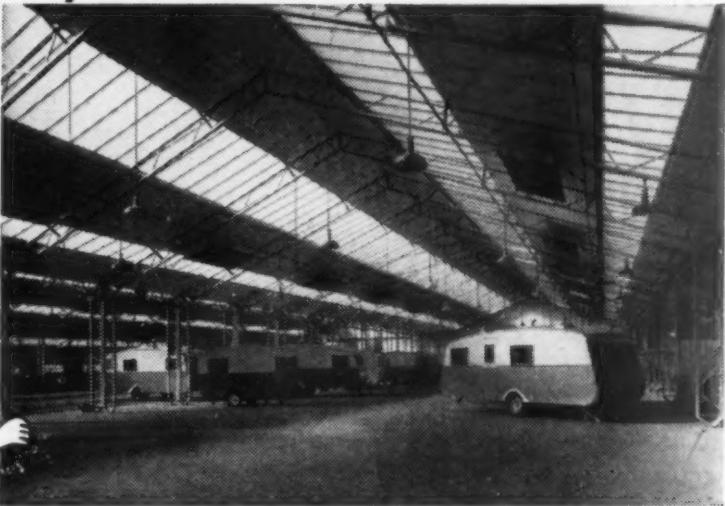
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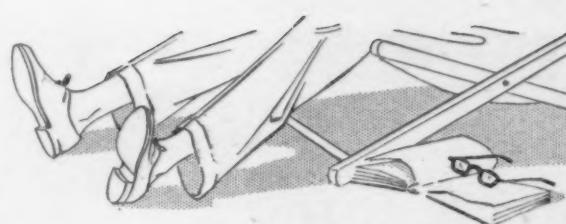
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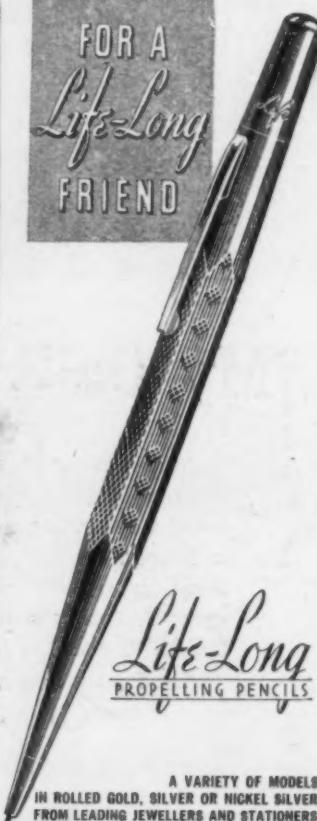
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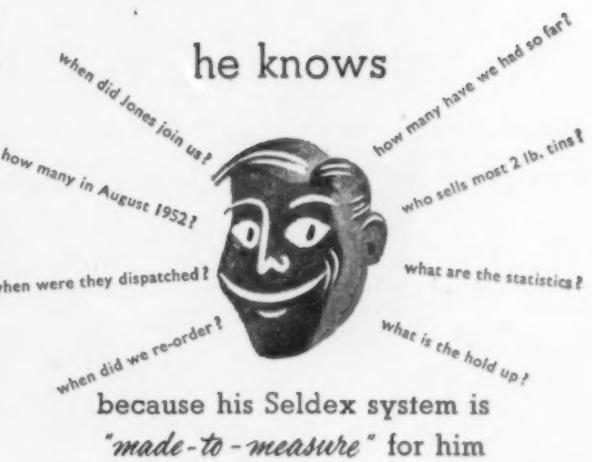
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"No hope in sight," he S.O.S.'d. "I'm almost sunk. Constipation's got me crippled amidships."

"Clear the gangways," I signalled, "we'll soon have you moving again."

"No steam," he gloomed. "They've closed collision bulkhead doors. You'll never get down to the engineroom."

"Bulkhead, that's it. You don't know your own ship," I told him. "Those gangways must be kept clear. They measure all of thirty feet. All your food passes along 'em. And unless your muscles down there are in trim and propel it along, you get trouble astern and your engines run dead-slow."

"Throw me a lifeline," he pleaded.

"Take bulk on board," I told him, "and you'll soon be buoyant again."

"But that's hopeless, I'm full up in the hold already."

"Bilge," I retorted. "The bulk you need is Kellogg's All-Bran. It enables your muscles to get to work and pump all the waste right through your system. Try it every morning at breakfast."

"Signal received and understood," came the answer, and he sailed away, homeward bound via his grocer's.



He loud-hailed me from 100 yards ahead, a week later.

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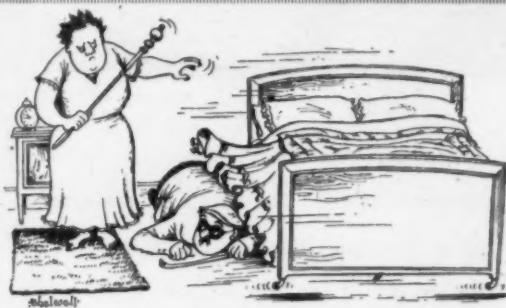
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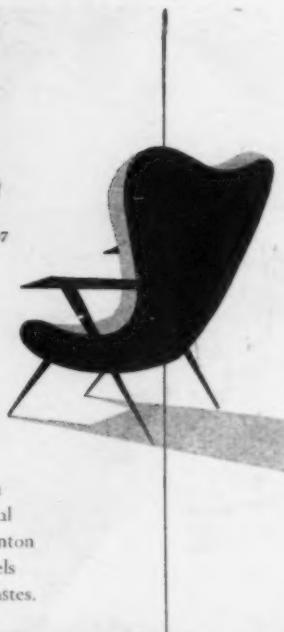
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Shell Nature Studies 17 MOTHS

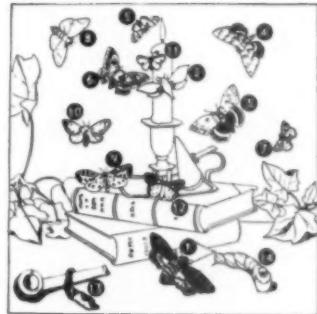
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Among many strange and beautiful British moths none is stranger than the DEATH'S HEAD HAWK MOTH (1), which is rare and marked with a skull and enters hives to steal honey. The ELEPHANT HAWK (2), trim as a plane, you may see hovering in twilight over honeysuckle blossom. Another rare moth is the CLIFDEN NONPAREIL (3), found in Kent, where the larvae feed on aspen; it resembles the very common RED UNDERWING (4). Local, too, is the BLACK ARCHES (5), found in the New Forest.

The noble EMPEROR MOTH (6) is a moorland species. Two destructive kinds are the MAGPIE (7), which damages currant bushes, and the subtly marked GOAT MOTH (8), whose larvae bore in trees. Day-flying moths include the GARDEN TIGER (9). Larvae of the PUSS MOTH (10) feed on willow and poplar. Other pretty moths are the CINNABAR (11) and the CREAM SPOT TIGER (12), whose larvae eat chickweed.

The two larvae or caterpillars are those of the PUSS MOTH (13) and the DEATH'S HEAD HAWK MOTH (14).



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